Exploring Postcolonial Trauma in Nigeria as stimulus for creating new Plays

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Signature……..

Date…….

Abstract

This research is situated within the practice-led method; enabling me as a playwright to gain stimulus for creating trauma informed plays. The framework for creating such plays in this research is the *centre-periphery* concept (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013, 43) associated with the *imagined nation*; a backdrop for understanding postcolonial trauma. In order to gain stimulus for playwriting in this research, I mainly explored Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman* for the purpose of understanding postcolonial trauma in my part of Africa, being Nigeria. I also explored other sources, enabling me to gain stimulus from embedded trauma motifs, useful for writing *The Longest Snake*, *The Endless Walk* and the Alternative plays. The Alternative plays, being interventive and socio-dramatic are associated with the initial plays I created, revealing how trauma may be understood from other perspectives.

The originality of this research and contribution to knowledge may be perceived in the new plays I created, which incorporate trauma notions. Also relevant is the role of the *circle* in conceptualisation and the use of the *centre-periphery* concept as template for playwriting and analysis. The originality may also be inferred from the interventive relevance of the created plays, touching on how postcolonial trauma may be understood from the lens of the *imagined nation*, and events in the *centre-periphery* context. This research also highlights how the collectives are traumatically affected by colonisation as mirrored in the sources explored and the new plays I created. Equally relevant are my personal experiences, perceived from the lens of African folklore and folktale milieu, which are relevant for explaining and crafting postcolonial trauma through praxis. This reiterates Gray and Marlins' (2016: 2) thoughts, that 'We learn most effectively by doing – by active experience, and reflection on that experience,' seen in the context of the practice-led approach I adopted in this research.

Glossary of Abbreviations/Terms

TFA: *Things Fall Apart* (Achebe, 1958).

DKH: *Death and The King's Horseman* (Soyinka, 1998).

PLR: Practice-led Research.

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Created Plays: This stands for the plays I created in this research *The Longest Snake*, *The Endless Walk* and the Alternative plays.

Praxis Windows: These are pages that show excerpts from the created plays, useful for understanding postcolonial trauma.

Alternative plays: ***The Endless Walk 2*** and ***Step in, don't step out of the Circle***. They are created by me for the purpose of further explaining postcolonial trauma and highlighting the interventive perspective.

My part of Africa: This denotes communities around Nigeria in Africa.

Esan: The Esans are anecdotally said to have originated from Benin (Edo) and later settled in the present area within Edo State, Nigeria. The word, Esan is anecdotally said to be anglicised by the colonialists as Ishan).

Notes on how the created plays may be read

I will like to suggest that the reader should initially read the first two Chapters; *The Introductory and Contextual notes* and the Second Chapter, the *Literature Review* for the purpose of gaining contextual understanding of postcolonial trauma from a 'colonialist' lens. The reader should then read the plays I created - *The Longest Snake, the Endless Walk* (see Appendix 1 and 2) as well as the *Alternative plays* so as to understand how trauma notions deduced from the first two Chapters are reflected in the created plays. Then the other Chapters should be read for the purpose of understanding the nature of praxis hinged on the integration of African traditional notions as template for interpreting and understanding postcolonial trauma within the imagined nation. The Notes on the side of the created plays (See the Appendix) should be read as reflections that corroborate postcolonial trauma notions in this research.

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Introduction

I. The purpose of this Research

In my quest to write new plays that are useful for understanding postcolonial trauma in Africa, I have sought to follow the pathway of an exegesis and praxis within a practice-led research. This research is therefore a creative response to the lingering conditions that are indicative of trauma brought about by negative colonialist activities (in my part of Africa, Nigeria) identified in the explored sources. The first point of stimulation for me as a playwright are the notions reflected in some of the texts explored, highlighting the painful failure of the collectives in Africa to be truly independent since they have been too reliant (dependent) on others, exemplified by imperialist authorities as seen in the explored texts. There are also the notions of stimulation identified in the plays I wrote in this research (see *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk* in Appendix 1 and 2) which corroborate notions of trauma highlighted in the explored texts and some of the key postcolonial terms explored. Apart from the notion of dependency and the 'centre-periphery concept' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013, 43) highlighted in the Introductory Notes, there is also the notion of the imagined nation which is useful for understanding postcolonial trauma within the context of the created plays. The new plays I have created and the exegesis signify a continuum of postcolonial trauma and decolonisation discourse which encapsulate the traumatic experiences highlighted all through this research.

II. The Questions addressed in this research and the focus of the Chapters

The following questions reflect the trajectory of my research as follows:

a. To what extent are the post-colonialist terms and concepts explored in this study helpful for understanding the notion of trauma in Africa?

b. How relevant are literary and socio-political literary sources for understanding the notion of colonialist induced trauma?

c. How might the notions of trauma deduced from the literary sources be useful for understanding postcolonialism?

d. How might the trauma elements deduced from the literary and non-literary sources be useful as stimulus for creating plays?

e. How might this research generate new knowledge?

Two areas define the structure of this research; they are the exegesis which shows the analytical components and the praxis which shows the creative or playwriting component. Moreover, the six Chapters of this research explore, explain, reflect and create, touching on the impact of colonialism on the individuals and collectives in Africa. The first Chapter explores some key areas associated with post colonialism including postcolonial trauma, decolonisation, centre-periphery concept, and dependency as antecedents to understanding the postcolonial text and postcolonial trauma (see full details in: Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013). Even within the context of the created plays, the key postcolonial terms reflect 'acts that respond to the experience of imperialism, whether directly or indirectly' (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996: 11). Thus, such terms have been explored in the first Chapter for understanding how the subject of trauma is put in context in preparation for my playwriting exercise. This is akin to Rogobete's (2015: 66) reflection on Shotter and Gergen (1989 and Andrews, et al, 2000) who explain the idea of 'creative interpretation' in this mode: 'People reconstruct their selves through the stories they tell about their past and the meaning they ascribe to the present in anticipation of the future. They shape their stories through active and creative interpretation' (Rogobete, 2015: 66). So my attitude as a playwright trying to understand postcolonial trauma is to use elements of the past to reconstruct the future.

In the second Chapter, I have explored key postcolonial texts for the insight they give; revealing that colonialism precipitates trauma. It is however important to note that similar postcolonial texts, reflecting postcolonial trauma in Africa, were written in form of poetry, prose and drama after the advent of colonialism in the continent, to 'deal with the effects of colonisation on cultures and societies' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2013: 204). Such texts identify varied conditions of trauma among individuals, collectives and whole nations during and after colonialist activities in Africa despite the purported 'independence' of African nations (2013: 204).

The third Chapter explores how the practice-led methodology has facilitated understanding of postcolonial trauma. The practice-led methodology has been relevant in reflecting the importance of knowing by doing; or the relevance of using elements or undertones in the exegesis as backdrop for dramatisation. The third Chapter also touches on the notion of knowing about postcolonial trauma through reading and reflecting on the African past and exploring the importance of using the imagined circle in praxis as well as the nation as a context for knowing about postcolonial trauma and reflecting on praxis. In this Chapter, the relevance of African nuances, narrative and folkloric forms as framework for crafting the written plays are being highlighted.

In the fourth Chapter, I focussed on the development of praxis within the context of reading texts, reflecting on texts and contexts, as well as creating through praxis. The creative framework also explores how an imagined circle is useful for creating the new plays; whilst the circle is perceived as a focus from which ideas are linked and actualised. The fifth Chapter analyses the emerging themes from the created plays and this research from the prism of postcolonial trauma. This brings out meanings that are imperative for understanding the exegesis and praxis. Finally, the sixth and final Chapter engages discussions and conclusions, revealing

what this research sets out to achieve. These include how the questions were engaged and how knowledge gained from the created plays suggest the way forward for the development of interventive praxis.

III The Research Ethics

Firstly, it is important to point out that this research is based on exegetical and creative resources imagined or drawn from written sources. In engaging with praxis and the analytical components of this research, I have reflected on the ethical implications of this study which also led to the following question: 'whose trauma is it?' Firstly, there is the suggestion that trauma-based plays are embedded with elements of suffering as pointed out by Meyer-Dinkgrafe and Watt (2010: 136-139). Secondly, it is also suggested that the playwright is likely to be affected by issues encountered in the research process. Amanda Stuart-Fisher (in Prentki and Preston, 2009: 110) points out the 'challenges that confront practitioners who engage with accounts of personal and political trauma' suggesting that there is 'the ethical implication of being a listener and performer of testimony' (2009: 110). The meanings that are being elicited is that the playmaker be made aware of the effect of trauma described as 'suffering the pain in the suffering' (O'Loughlin, 2014: 118-119) which may not be associated with me considering that I am not performing the plays but merely analysing and creating new plays. O'Loughlin's notion is akin to A.W. Frank's idea that we are all 'wounded storytellers' (2013: xi) meaning that there is the possibility of being affected by trauma notions; a condition that I may not identify with myself. David B. Morris, in 'The Culture of Pain' identifies the area of pain as 'physical or mental,' pointing out that people who encounter such trauma-based plays according to DeShazer (2005: 70) need to seek psychological help, a notion which I do not agree with because praxis in the context of this research is limited to the playwright. In that context, such psychological assistance might not be necessary because as a playwright, I am distant from the images reflected; since I am

functioning in a Library setting. So I am unlike other writers who may be operating from actual trauma sites who might need such psychological assistance.

I am also aware of the need to handle this research sensitively and honestly with regards to the content of the created plays and the exegesis, following the rules required for handling trauma narratives, experiences, texts, as well as the sensitive presentation of notions without exaggeration. The notion of sensitivity has been applied along the lines of settings, themes, characters and language in the created plays (Saldana, 2005: 32). Saldana (2005: 32) also points out that integrity is maintained in the exegesis and created plays, since ethics demand that cultural issues are treated with integrity within the analysis of the exegesis and the creating of the plays. In adhering to those points, accounts from all sides have been fairly and honestly presented and exaggeration and the use of offensive language have been avoided to ascertain validity.

IV The pathway of Praxis

In writing and developing the plays in this research, I have reflected on Raimes and Miller-Cochran's use of literary analysis for the 'interpretation of the piece of literature…to persuade other readers of the validity of their interpretation' (2016: 116). In the context of interpretation, praxis identifies with the idea of highlighting (or identifying) 'the one idea that you think is the most important' (2016: 16). This is related to this study within the context of identifying aspects of the explored sources that are useful for engaging praxis. This study has also identified with the idea of brainstorming or idea generation when relating to different aspects that are useful for praxis (2016: 17). Equally relevant is Raimes and Miller-Cochran's notion of 'purpose,' relating to what a writer hopes to accomplish in a text and 'voice,' which relates to 'the unique perspective' the writers hopes to bring into the written piece (2016: 17). The following notions further reflect how praxis is engaged in this research:

a. The Context of main plays: The explorations in Chapter One and the Literature Review reflect the background to playmaking.

b. Play Structure: The narrative structure of the created plays is similar to folktale narrative forms in Africa.

c. Characterisation: The characters are everyday sort of people in Africa – reflecting how trauma is associated with individuals and collectives in the imagined nation.

d. Theme: Both plays have themes that revolve around movement from one place to another. This highlights how dependency is reflected in the research and shows how Africans demonstrate what they may have learnt from the colonialists through education.

e. Settings: The play, '*The Longest Snake'* is set in a typical rural area in Nigeria, while '*The Endless Walk'* is set in the Sahara Desert. These two settings help illustrate how the previously colonised escape poverty by gravitating towards colonialist notions explored in the Introductory Notes.

f. Language: The language of the created plays reflects the feelings of the people affected by negative colonialist circumstances. The language of the created plays is associated with the mode of communication of indigenous people as reflected in African folktales. The didactic form, inferred anecdotally, reflects the simplicity that is associated with the language of folktales in Africa (see *ABAYOLE*, an Esan Folktale. Appendix 3). The didactic sense also suggests reclaiming traditional cognitive modes – which reflect the conscious identification with the cultures of the continent (Eboreime, J. 2003: 315) related to learning from the folktale medium (see *ABAYOLE*, Appendix 3).

g. The Circle: As stated earlier in this Chapter, circles play a major role in performances in Africa (Banham, 2004, 94) (Harding, 2013: 145). In adopting the circle, in the context of the centre-periphery, the traditional essence is being reiterated. It is also useful to know that the notion of the circle has been used in

other instances like: 'the circle of security,' COS, associated with attachment needs in intervention (Powell, Cooper, Hoffman and Marvin, 2014). Colbert refers to 'cakewalk' associated with 'African tribal celebrations, especially the African circle dance' (2011: 106) highlighting the essence of circles in African performance Arts although the term 'tribal' should be highlighted as 'ethnic group.' Sterling Stuckey, in his book, Slave Culture, points out that the circle and the notion of the centre of the circle cuts across various rituals and performances in different parts of Africa (1987: 11-15). This is adopted in praxis as an imaginary circle which portrays creative engagement, which is akin to brainstorming reflected in Danby and Kemp's elaborate circles (1982, 98-99).

h. The Mood: This is associated with conflict as reflected in the created plays as characters are seen struggling against colonial institution identified in the Literature Review, and corroborated in the Introductory Notes. It is within such contexts that trauma may be understood within the individual and collective characters associated with the pain of colonisation inferred from the sources explored.

V The Limitations of Study

This study encapsulates reading, reflecting and playmaking/playwriting. It should be noted that playmaking and playwriting are used interchangeably in this research. Whereas they are useful for understanding the creative process, the playmaking process is mostly about the planning of praxis, while playwriting involves the writing of the created plays. It is within the planning process that the use of circles may be understood as a framework for composing the plays. It is important to mention that the texts explored for knowing about postcolonial trauma are drawn from literary texts from various parts of Africa. Moreover, literary sources were explored for acquiring perspectives of colonialist activities in Africa and in Nigeria particularly. Apart from the Alternative plays, two main plays were written during the course of this study; they are, *The Longest Snake*, a

metaphor for the Nigerian Railway System created by the British Colonialist regime and the second play is *The Endless Walk*, based on migration of Africans across the Sahara Desert, a tedious travel linked to the seeking of economic liberation in Europe, as reflected and inferred from some of the texts analysed and the plays created in this study. Generally, the playmaking framework is hinged around the epistemological relevance of Africa, touching on the importance and centrality of narratives to the various cultures. It is important to mention that other trauma based plays were written in the course of this research for the purpose of understanding postcolonial trauma, though not included in this research.

Praxis Window 1

Excerpts from praxis and indicative of stimulus

<table>
<tr>
<td>Play 1</td>
<td>
Play - The Longest Snake By Isi Agboaye
CHARACTERS
• The longest snake: metaphorically a train.
• The Chief
• The Town Crier
• First Person
• Second person
• The First Woman
• The Second Woman
• The First Official and the Second Official.
• Woman
• The Eye of the future (A prophetic voice)
• Villagers
• Tuwa and Kai (Two village children).

NTRODUCTION:
• This play reveals the reaction of some rural folks in my part of Africa to the coming of the longest snake in the land - a metaphor for the railway system.
• Incidentally, they were told that the coming of the longest snake would usher in prosperity to all in the community.
• Sooner or later, they discovered that the train was a conduit for sapping all their economic wealth through the coast to distant nations in Europe.

The Chief:
Dance, sing – enjoy this beautiful day. This is the beginning of great things that will come to our land. We are happy; this will bring our share of good things. We are happy to see this day. Our daylight shall never end.
</td>
<td>
Progression of Praxis

At this preliminary stage I reflected on sources related to Postcolonialism and other relevant areas explored in Chapter 1 of this Thesis

In writing this play, I introduced The Eye of the future as a prophetic entity - construed as the voice of conscience or wisdom. This character is anecdotally evident in African folklore and folktales. This is synonymous with the importance of African epistemologies in this Research which folks in the imagined nation have disregarded or purportedly made to disregard by the colonialists.
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play 2</td>
<td>
Play - The Endless Walk - Isi Agboaye

CHARACTERS
1st Man
2nd Man
Unknown Voice

INTRODUCTION:
This play is based on the experiences of immigrants taking the risk of travelling through dangerous conditions from Africa to Europe. The plot of the play features a man who travelled with many others across the fierce weather of the Sahara Desert in search of greener pastures in Europe. Although a few of them were nearly marooned, they made to it to the shores of Spain through the Mediterranean Ocean, where they faced uncertain conditions.
</td>
<td>
Writing and Reflecting

As a playwright, I am reading and asking questions. I am also reflecting on the notion that the characters in the play could be anybody’s child in Africa. They could be underprivileged folks or graduates from the Universities in Africa who certainly have some knowledge of what is going on around the world. Their pain is linked to colonialist activities that have trickled down the ages as trauma.
</td>
</tr>
</table>

Chapter One

Introductory and Contextual Notes

1.1 Primary terms for explaining the research focus (see: Figure 1.1).

This section opens up the discussion on how postcolonial trauma may be understood within the context of exploring postcolonial terms which are useful for understanding colonialist activities in Africa. In explaining such terms, the notions explored in the Second Chapter which capture colonialist activities in my part of Africa become clearer. Also, the table is useful for explaining how and why postcolonial trauma should be perceived within the context of the meanings in the explored postcolonial sources and the created plays. Therefore, the combination of the explored sources and the created plays bring understanding on how postcolonial trauma is perceived within the context of the terms explored in this research. Moreover, they are useful for knowing how the people in that area are affected by colonialist activities, which may be related to a specific time and place.

The Table is also shows that the term 'postcolonial trauma' is associated with 'real people,' although they are designated as living in the imagined nation in this research. Moreover, it is for the purpose of showing that the people who are affected by postcolonial trauma are located in Africa, and that the diaspora is an extension of Africa. This means that, the created plays are capable of mirroring issues that affect the people in those locations.

The notions in the Table may be associated with facilitating the exploratory process and assisting in the 'uncovering' and 'interpreting' process in the research (see: Kershaw and Nicholson, 2011: 89), being means of relating the experience of trauma to meanings in the exegesis. This makes the idea of trauma clearer, especially when relating the terms in the Table to individuals and collectives are portrayed within the research.

Figure 1.1

Terms for identifying the perpetrators of postcolonial trauma in Africa	Colonialism Neo-colonialism Imperialism	The concepts are useful for understanding the cultural difference between the 'Africans' and the 'colonialists'. They are useful for knowing about colonialist exploits, oppression and trauma in Africa.
Terms for understanding the conditions of Africans after 'Independence'	Postcolonialism Postcolonial trauma Decolonisation	These terms are useful for understanding the notion of 'independence' in Africa and how the individuals, collectives and nations have been represented in postcolonial texts.
Terms associated with the outcomes of colonialism – being postcolonial trauma	Centre-periphery concept Dependency Hybridity Mimicry	These terms are useful for understanding the outcomes of colonialism on individuals and collectives in Africa.
Terms for identifying trauma in Africa and understanding the focus of praxis	Trauma Wound Trauma plays Trauma narratives Trauma memory	These terms are useful for understanding the presence of trauma elements in the explored texts. They are also useful for understanding the importance of the dramatisation of trauma.

1.2 Terms for identifying the perpetrators of postcolonial trauma in Africa

In this research, I have explored **Colonialism,** which is perceived in the context of 'the specific form of cultural exploitation that developed with the expansion of Europe over the last 400 years' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2000: 45). This reveals that colonialism refers to the period when the nations of Europe occupied Africa; also perceived in the context of **neo-colonialism** (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013, 177-178) meaning, 'new colonialism' which is a term associated with the first President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah (2013, 177-178). This suggests that despite colonialist exploits in Africa 'after the independence of African nations,' there was a new form of colonisation which necessitated decolonisation (Ngugi,

1994). The term **imperialism** shows 'a conscious and openly advocated policy of acquiring colonies for economic, strategic and political advantage' (2000: 122-127). The idea of acquiring colonies suggests ownership and subjugation suggested in the sources I explored as well as the plays I wrote in this research. The sources or texts that I explored may be associated with the activities of the collectives affected by colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism.

1.3 Terms for explaining the conditions of Africans after 'Independence'

I have also explored the term **Postcolonialism;** which reflects 'the effects of colonization on cultures and societies' (Gilbert and Tompkins, 2002: 2) (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2000: 186). I have deliberately positioned the exploration in the first two Chapters of this research where the activities of individuals and collectives affected by colonialism are shown. I am aware that **Postcolonial trauma** may be explored from Ifowodo's postulation of Postcolonial history, perceived as a history of trauma, as he relates postcolonial trauma to corruption in Africa (2013: 131); a notion that I do not agree with totally. This is because the traumatic conditions inferred from the explored sources and the created plays may be related to the mind-set of the collectives apart from the notion of corruption. I strongly agree with Stef Crap's postulation on *Postcolonial Witnessing*; seen in the context of traumas of non-western and minority groups, reflected as, 'first and third world traumas' or 'traumatic experiences of members of non-Western cultural traditions' (2013: 3) which may also be seen from the prism of trauma being a universal phenomenon (see Freud's description of trauma later in this Chapter). Furthermore, she added that Postcolonial trauma is understood in the context of 'Trauma theory's failure to give the sufferings of those belonging to non-western or minority groups due recognition' (2013: 3). Her text is corroborated by Frantz Fanon's research on mental health professions, touching on the 'psychological effects of racism and colonialism' (2013: 4) whose undertones or outcomes are reflected in the texts explored in the Literature Review. Postcolonial trauma, in

the context of trauma theory and Crap's explanation is seen in the following perspectives: 'alternative conceptualisation of trauma,' 'insidious trauma,' 'oppression-based trauma,' 'postcolonial syndrome,' and 'post-traumatic slavery syndrome' (2013: 4). She believes that such experiences 'can account for and respond to collective, ongoing, everyday forms of traumatizing violence' (2013: 4) which may also be seen in the plays I created in this research. These elements of 'traumatizing violence' may be related to negative impacts of colonialism and postcolonial trauma (Henry and Menestrel, 2009: 49). The trauma notions in my plays are akin to Ifowodo's postulation about Soyinka's perception of trauma, reflected as the dramatisation of the 'cataclysmic moment of contact between the indigenous community or nation and the colonizer' (2013: 19). He further described the 'awful foreboding' of trauma from Soyinka's point of view as, 'a world wrenched from its true course and smashed against alien boulders, leaving its inhabitants floundering in an ominous void, aptly names postcolonial trauma as the chthonic realm deep within which the play's driving impetus is located (2013: 19) which may also be a summation of the condition that the characters in the plays that I created found themselves.

I will also like to identify the experience of the Igbo nation in Achebe's *TFA* as part of that world described by Soyinka through Ifowodo as a 'world wrenched from its true course and smashed against alien boulders' especially in the context where things fell apart in the text and also highlighted in the plays I created where collectives are left in confusion as a result of being overly dependent a colonialist tuned mind-set. However, mention should have been made of the pre-colonial influences on trauma reiterated in the second Chapter.

The term **decolonisation** suggests 'revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms' (2000: 63). I will like to relate praxis and the created plays to the idea of 'revealing' (2000: 63) embedded trauma elements, which are reflective of

the negative effects of colonialist activities, which may be seen in the context of shaping 'the content of African intellectual interventions' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 58). This is linked to the notion that, 'Africa is a continent that suffered and experienced multiple levels of subjugations and denigrations that affected its identity formation and ways of knowing' (2013: 58). The notion of 'revealing' (2000: 63) is associated with trauma elements elicited from the postcolonial texts explored, (*TFA* and *DKH*) which are useful for understanding trauma within the context of the imagined nation and the plays I created in this research.

1.4 Terms associated with Colonialism and Postcolonial Trauma

In exploring the difference between **Postcolonial Theory** and **Postcolonial Trauma,** postcolonial theory would be seen in the context of 'postcolonial studies, 'and 'postcolonial literature.' Postcolonial theory is focussed on the impact of European colonialism on 'society, culture, history and politics of the formerly colonised territories in Africa and other parts of the world (Cuddon, 2014: 550). Moreover, Postcolonial theory is associated with the work of various writers like Frantz Fanon' (whose reflections are mostly based on the oppressions surrounding the colonialist period) (Ansell, 2013: 120) and Edward Said, whose discourses, based on 'Orientalism' also address 'cultural legacies of colonialism' (2013: 120). The meanings drawn from their reflections and highlighted in this research are centred on the awareness that past colonialist activities are linked with the subjugation of colonial subjects (2013: 120). Other voices in postcolonial theory include, Homi Bhabha, who reflects around 'hybridity of identity and culture' (2013: 120), and Gayatri Spivak, whose reflections on the 'subaltern' (2013: 120), reverberates notions of colonialist oppressions mirrored in the characters in the created plays in this research. On the other hand, **postcolonial trauma** may be seen in the context of the painful and lingering memory of real people who experienced and resisted the negative impacts of colonialism (Abigail Ward, ed, 2015) as related to my part of Africa in this research. Quoting David Lloyd, (2000),

Ward, (2015) definition of trauma may be seen in the context of postcolonial trauma, seen in the context of 'violent intrusion' by colonialist agents who violate the individual or collective as reflected in various sources explored in this research. Such real experiences mirrored from different sources is also described by Ifowodo (2013) as the 'untreated wound of history' (see: 2.8); a notion which may be related to the traumatic posturing of the characters in the created plays in this research.

It is also relevant to reflect on Huggan (2013: xci) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2013: 42-43) suggestion on how individuals and collectives are understood within the context of colonialism, which may be related to how the characters in the play I created relate to the centre-periphery concept. Moreover, Gena Degel Caponi's notion of the 'circle' corroborates my Esan folktale experiences, touching on how the notion of the 'circle' may be understood within the context of the created plays in the following reflections: 'In the majority of cultures across Africa, group rituals were performed in a circle, dancers danced in a circle, and individuals performed solos in the centre before returning to the surrounding circle of community. The circle helped to keep everybody involved, active, and independent (Caponi, (1999: 9).

I am also interested Caponi's description of the traditional ways of life in Africa (Caponi, 1999: 9), which corroborate why the notion of the circle is useful for explaining praxis in this research. The postcolonial texts explored reveal that the meanings related to the functions of the 'circle' have been neglected; suggesting that colonialism relegated African identities to the periphery as pointed out by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 42-43). Ndlovu-Gatsheni further points out that, 'colonialism created dependency of the ex-colonized societies on finished products manufactured by ex-colonial powers' (2013: 42-43). This suggests that, rather than Africans appreciating their values within the circle, they are stuck in the

periphery, being dependent on others (2013: 42). Ndlovu-Gatsheni continued by saying that, 'African consumption tastes and values were drastically shaped by colonial modernity to resemble those of the West' (2013: 42). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 43) added that, 'within the modernization discourse, Africa was in the traditional stage of development and its path of development was to follow the steps that were taken by Europeans and African nations.' He also added that, the 'historical peculiarities and particularities that explained the conditions of the African continent were ignored' (2013: 43).

It is within this context that this research, especially the exegesis and the created plays finds relevance as seen in this reflection by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin stated that, 'Dependency theory offers an explanation for the continued impoverishment of colonized 'Third World' - meaning that notions of poverty in the created plays may be traced to 'dependency' which may also be associated with 'global capitalism' which is the brain-child of the colonialists and purported agents of 'global capitalism' whom Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin believe established 'colonies of producers of raw materials and foodstuffs for the industrialized metropolitan centres' a notion that is corroborated in *The Longest Snake*. As a result of the colonialist economic policies, the industralisation and development of these regions were 'retarded.' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 77). It is such retardation that may also be partly blamed foe events surrounding *The Endless Walk*.

It is also within the context of the retardation, enunciated (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013) that the notions of trauma within the weak periphery may be understood, while the strong centre remains permanently in the hands of the oppressors, whether the colonialists, neo-colonialists or agents of colonialism. agents (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. 2013: 44). In other words, the centre is perceived as harbouring the privileged in the society, while the periphery is understood as

harbouring those described as the underprivileged as reflected in the postcolonial texts and the created plays. Achebe's *TFA* reveals that the centre of the communal circle was a place where the people felt a sense of safety before it was appropriated by the colonialists (Obiechina, 1975: 212); however, in the context of the created plays, the condition of the collectives had not changed.

It is within the above context that **Hybridity,** which connotes**,** 'racial mixture …expressed in such labels as mulatto, cross-breed, and half-breed' would be discussed (Ansell, 2013: 79). The term hybridity in the context of the explored sources and the created plays is related to instances of mediocrity, induced by the impressions created by the colonialists in the mind of the African (Ansell, 2013: 79). Such instances of mediocrity are blamed for the lack of self-determination and loss of identity reflected in the texts explored and the plays created, despite the independence of several African nations. Within that context, it would be imagined that the characters in the created plays, like those in the explored postcolonial texts lost their heritage as a result of adverse colonialist activities. Ansell (2013: 79) suggests that the African is neither here nor there; not fully independent, educated, or fully political. This implies that the African is perceived as neither fully African nor fully European but cross-bred and half-bred victims of colonialism (2013: 79). These outcomes of colonialism are described as: 'new transcultural forms within the contact zones produced by colonization' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2000: 118). It is also suggested that the hybridized African mind is left in a state of abandonment; foreshadowing negative outcomes that are 'linguistic, cultural, political and racial, etc' (2000: 118). In praxis, I have articulated such features in the characters (in the created plays); as they are caught between embedded colonialist and traditional African mentality as suggested by the postcolonial sources explored.

I am also interested in the term **Mimicry** which suggests that the impersonation of European forms by Africans is more advantageous than our own traditional forms (Kararach, G. 2014: 273-274). Quoting 'Goethe's final Note on World Literature,' Bhabha's notion of hybridity suggests that nations in Africa, 'could not return to their settled and independent life again without noticing that they had learned many foreign ideas and ways, which they had unconsciously adopted' (Bhabha, 1994: 16). This insight is identified in the created plays where the characters seemed 'marooned,' thinking that their ultimate deliverance from the 'scars of colonialism' would be actualised by travelling through the Sahara Desert to Europe. The created plays suggest that mimicry is perceived through dramatising historical events in Africa which is associated with Gina Shmukler's question, 'How do you make theatre from trauma?' (Barnes and Coetzee, 2014: 155) – a question that has been aptly answered in the creation of the trauma based plays in this research.

1.5 Terms for identifying and explaining the focus of praxis

In exploring postcolonial trauma, it will be important to briefly explore the historical perspective of the term. Trauma is based on a persistent 'pattern of suffering' which Caruth, (1996: 1), associates with Freud in, '*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (2015: 6). Such patterns of suffering may be associated with trauma motifs or elements identified in the explored postcolonial sources and the created plays in this research. I would like to argue that Freud's description of trauma as a 'condition,' associated with 'accidents,' 'disasters,' and 'wars' may be associated with postcolonial trauma. Thus, if Freud describes such conditions as capable of 'general enfeeblement and the disturbance of the mental capacities,' they may also be seen in the context of the loss and pain caused by colonialist deprivations and intrusions in my part of Africa explored in the sources and highlighted in the created plays. Equally associated with the above, is Alexander's (*Trauma: A Social Theory*, 2013: 6) notion of 'Cultural trauma which he relates to collectives,

claiming that they may have been 'subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks on their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future destiny in fundamental and irrevocable ways.' I will argue that such notions are useful for explaining postcolonial trauma in my part of Africa because of their universal construct (Alexander, 2013: 7); perceived as a condition that is common to all peoples on earth, despite the fact that they are hinged on European psychology (see further reiterations on Alexander's position in Chapter 2 of this research).

I will also like to relate to Motsi and Masango's (2012: 1) notion of the 'ego-centric (western) approach' to trauma and the 'socio-centric' (African) perspectives of trauma. According to them, trauma cannot be limited to the feelings of an individual (as in western construct), but that of the community (2012: 1). In support of this notion, they also referred to Mbiti, (1969) who opined that individuals in Africa live corporately; a notion that is reflected in the explored sources and the created plays. They further quoted Mulango, (cited in Magesa 1997: 64); stating that, 'The life of the individual can only be grasped as it is shared. A member of the tribe, clan, and the family knows that he does not live to himself, but within the community.' It is within such contexts that experiences associated with trauma may be related to the characters in the explored sources and the created plays. One notion is pertinent; although Motsi and Masango (2012: 1) may argue that trauma in Africa is 'psychosocial,' (2012: 7) meaning that the collective is mainly involved, on observation of the characters in the created plays, it would be seen that some of them reflect individualistic traits. This means that they take individual decisions that are far removed from the collective will of the community. This 'ego-centric' condition may be related to the impact of dependency on western values identified in the explored sources and reflected in the created plays; thus negating the 'socio-centric' perspective.

Furthermore, the term, **Trauma** is used in this research to denote an 'experience of great emotional anguish' (Alexander, J.C., Eyerman, R, and Giesen, B. 2004: 61). This notion of 'emotional anguish' (2004: 61) may also be associated with the negative effects of colonialism in Africa, giving a clear picture of 'assimilation' as described by Cesaire, being an underpinning of the conditions of some of the characters in the plays I created in this research:

> We did not know what Africa was, Europeans despised everything about Africa, and in France people spoke of a civilised and a barbarian world. The barbarian world was Africa, and the civilised world was Europe. Therefore, the best one could do with an African was to assimilate him: the ideal was to turn him into a Frenchman with a black skin (Moore-Gilbert, Stanton, and Maley, 2013: 7).

As extrapolated from Cesaire's account, trauma is associated with the term, '**wound**,' which may be associated with 'cultural trauma' reflecting the pain of oppression (2004: 61). This may be understood in the indelible experiences, now reflected as scars or memories of individuals and collectives (within the imagined nation) portrayed in the postcolonial texts explored. The explored texts show that these scars have a way of haunting individuals and communities as reflected in the plays I created. Such connotations of trauma suggest 'dramatic loss of identity and meaning' (2004: 61) or 'a tear in the social fabric, affecting a group of people' (2004: 61). Within the same context, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 52) and Eze, (2011: 31) perceive trauma as, 'Africa having an immense white inflicted wound in the soul' - a notion corroborated by Craps, who perceives trauma as a product of history (2013: 20) suggesting that England had exported 'violence and suffering in the name of imperialism and colonialism' (2013: 11). It is therefore on this historical standpoint that the created plays find credibility in terms of the embedded notions of trauma.

The term **Trauma plays**, authenticates the created plays in the sense that the term is associated with Fanon's notion of 'the massive psycho-existential complex' and the forced 'deviation on the negro' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 267) –

which is perceived as the mind-set of the people in my part of Africa, being Nigeria; considering trauma 'as being deeply buried in the individual, requiring bold therapeutic measures' (Sajnani and Johnson, 2014: 12). Note that those affected, as perceived in the characters I the created plays are 'viewed as being extremely unidentified, with many victims unable to come forward' as a result of societal bias identified by Sajnani and Johnson (2014: 12). From a similar perspective, I also identify with **Trauma narratives** as textual and non-textual sources explored in this research. Trauma narratives are associated with narratives of individuals and collectives in the society, as gleaned from texts or other sources. Mengel and Borzaga give a clearer perspective of how the creation of the new plays, though hinged on notions of the trauma focussed past, may also be a ray of hope for the future as he says that, 'the language of trauma, then, proves to be an invaluable tool to investigate and understand…because though explaining the mechanisms by which the past is repeated and negatively continued, it also addresses the crucial question of how change and transformation might become possible (Mengel and Borzaga's, 2012: x) .

The tool of investigation related by Mengel and Borzaga (2012: x) is associated with the creative process in this research. In other words, trauma plays created reflect elements of trauma. The term, **trauma memory**, like trauma narratives, are perceived in 'the experience of violence and trauma in a colonial context' (Mengel and Borzaga, 2012: xiii) which precipitate 'the importance of reclaiming the past' as seen in the created plays which reflect traumatised conditions, which they describes as, 'transcending mechanisms of victimization and resentment, so typical of traumatized consciousness' (2012: xiii).

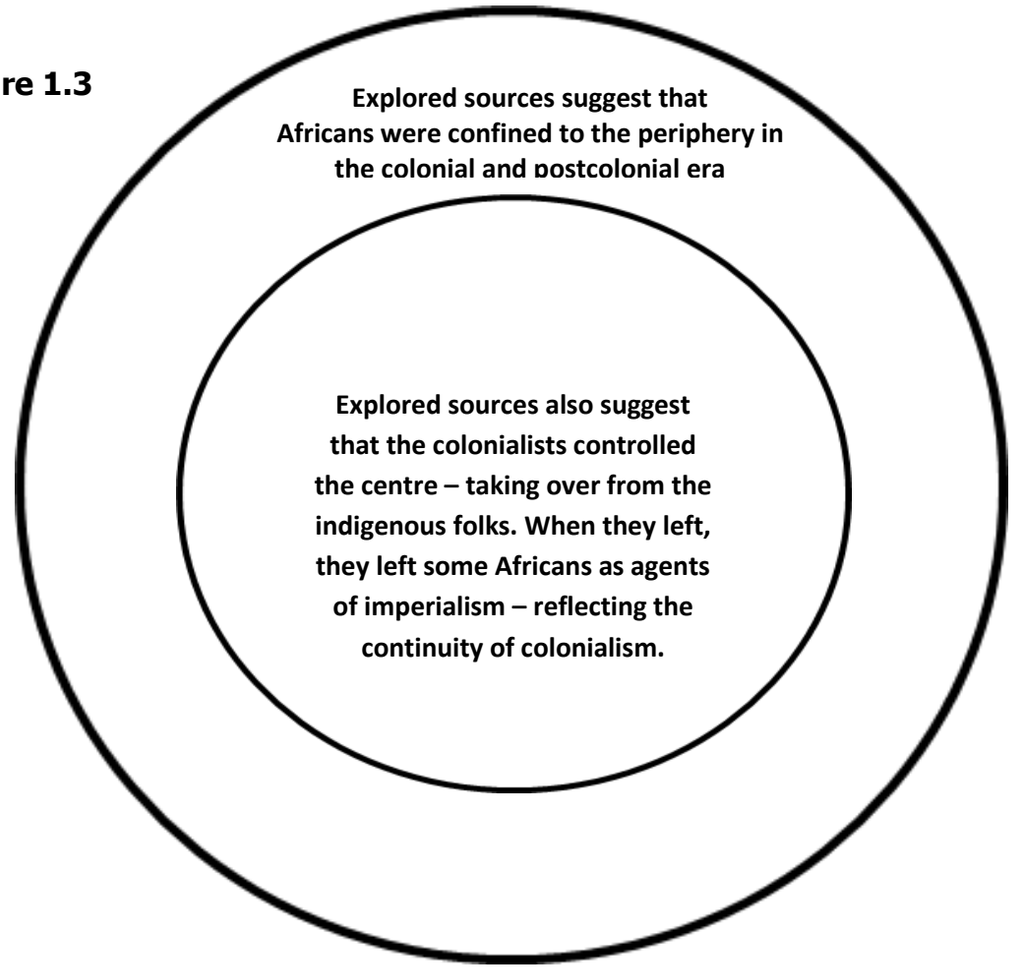
I am particularly interested in the term **postcolonial performances** because it is directly related to praxis in this research. It is coined by Gilbert and Tompkins (2002: 11), and useful for getting a clearer picture of the plays I created in this

research as a medium of knowing about postcolonial trauma. From Gilbert and Tompkins' perspective, (2002: 11) the created plays reflect 'acts that respond to the experience of imperialism, whether directly or indirectly' (2002: 11). They are also perceived as acts that relate to the 'continuation and/or regeneration' (1996: 11) of colonised communities leading to further decolonisation. It would be seen that the created plays may be seen in the same context as 'acts performed with the awareness of, and sometimes the incorporation of, post-contact forms' (2002: 11) as well as 'acts that interrogate the hegemony that underlies imperial representation' (Gilbert and Tompkins, 2002: 11).

In terms of postcolonial dramatic experimentations, Inyang and Ebewo reflect on the Ntak Inyang Community in Nigeria, noted for targeting 'conflict resolution' (Barnes and Coetzee, 2014, 48-69). There are also similar theatrical experiences in Otobi, Benue State of Nigeria, reflecting 'Theatre for development in conflict management' (Dugga, 2000: 137-146). There is no indication of such experimentations reflecting trauma notions; neither are they said to be directly connected to the exploration of colonialist induced trauma reflected. Such community-based experimentations may be perceived in the context of Globalisation, suggesting that, 'individual lives and local communities are affected by economic and cultural forces that operate worldwide' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 127). However, this research may be specifically seen as deviating from the generalised notion, touching on the need to specifically tackle postcolonial trauma analytically and creatively.

Figure 1.2

Figure 1.3



1.6 Secondary terms for understanding the research focus

I have deliberately included this section to the introduction, exploring the coming of colonialists to Africa; when they came to Africa, when they 'left' and what the 'centre' and 'periphery' represent in the context of the experiences between the colonialists and Africans (Ngugi, 1986: 6-9) (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013:

43-44). Within this context, it would be necessary to explore Ngugi's lens of 'moving the centre' (1993: 1-3) highlighting 'the decolonisation of the mind' (Ngugi: 1988). It is important to perceive Ngugi's notion of decolonisation as the need for change that is generated from Africa. This suggests that Africans should be conscious of change, freedom and the need to actualise change. This touches on how nations in Africa should be; as they were in the pre-colonial era (see Figure 1.2); contrary to what they became in the colonialist era (see Figure 1.3).

1.7 An exploration of the term, 'Africa' and 'Nation'

I am creating the plays, within the premise that Africa is perceived as 'the world's most thoroughly colonised region' (Benjamin and Hall: 2010: 93). This reveals why the continent of Africa is configured as a state associated with 'eternal colonialism' (2010: 93) considering the outcomes of trauma reflected in the created plays. Such outcomes are linked with the 'lingering effects of colonialism' (2010: 93) which is associated with 'many problems that afflict various African countries at the present time with differing degrees of intensity' (Olufemi Taiwo, 2010: 3). The terms 'eternal' and 'lingering' show the intensity of trauma among the individuals and collectives as perceived in the explored texts and the created plays. Ndlovu-Gatsheni points out that Africa has more than fifty countries; but though Africans are referred to as 'African People' he opines that there seems to be no agreement on the meaning of Africa and who an African are (2013: 100). Geographically, Africa is said to be the second largest continent on earth; while Nigeria for example, is said to be the largest nation in Africa by population (Khan, 2016: 353-354). The peoples are predominantly Christians and Muslims (Falola, T. and Oyeniyi, B.A. 2015: 313) (Falola, T. and Jean-Jacques, eds. 2015: xi-xix). As a basis of knowing about the foundation of colonialist activities in Nigeria, Kemp (2014: 177) suggests that Nigeria is 'an artificial creation' of the British or of 'European diplomacy and expansionism' perceived as a response to the economic needs of the British empire (Kemp, T. 2014: 177). Kemp (2014: 177) and Semai's

notions (2016: 27) are useful for understanding how collective trauma in Africa is perceived. Shamai (2016: 8) in exploring cultural trauma, relates to Pastor's explanation, which I would relate to this research as he says: 'when people who have the sense of belonging to a collective, such as a state, or an ethnic or religious group, feel that they have been subjected to fearful and painful events, which have left their mark on their collective consciousness and memory' (2016: 8) which is indicative of traumatic undertones among the collectives. Also relating to Sztompka (2000) Shamai (2016: 8) defines cultural trauma as 'a socially constructed process that has an impact not only on the past, but also on the future identity of the collective' reflecting how trauma may be located in the exegesis and demonstrated in the created plays.

I am also interested in the term, 'Nation' which is associated with the term 'imagined nation' for the purpose of relating notions of trauma to a specific group of people or a collective. David Macey (2000: 41) who relates the term to Homi K. Bhabha's Nation and Narration (1990) may be compared to Benedict Anderson's thesis, (1883), which states that a nation is perceived in the context of 'an imagined community' inspired by Ernest Renan's piece, What is a Nation? (1882). The idea of 'the imagined community' is a backdrop for knowing about the nations in Africa and the trauma they experienced. So, in the research, the term imagined nation connotes a typical nation or community in Africa which is unique in several ways, especially in the ways that the people are governed as well as the outcomes of governance from which the effects of trauma may be related.

The term, praxis is associated with 'purposeful human activity' or 'doing' in Greek (Macey, 311: 2000). Praxis is associated with the creative (playmaking) focus of this research. This research opens up the possibility of understanding the eclectic nature of praxis as being multi-dimensional, resting in the Hegel, Marx and Engels' perception of praxis as 'creative labour' (Kramer, Hinojosa and Royeen, 2003: 158).

The notion of 'creative labour' encapsulates the creative effort of this research hinged on the purposeful creation of plays for the reason of understanding postcolonial trauma.

1.8 When the colonialists came to Africa

In justifying the negative effects of colonialism by the coming of Europeans to Africa, I am exploring the aforementioned throes of trauma in the imagined nation. Moreover, such throes are perceived in the negative outcomes of the Slave Trade reflected by Ojo, E.O (2015: 107), Ochonu (2014: 34-36) and Pakenham (1991: xxiii) who all agree that the European nations that colonised African nations took advantage of them in 'the scrambling and partitioning of Africa,' (reiterated by Pakenham, 1991) which raises the possibility of trauma. Dodds equally pointed out the possibility of trauma when he referred to 'boundary creations,' meaning that there were alignments which dislocated many Africans to wrong regions (2014: 181) raising a strong possibility for bad governance and poverty, of which the colonial masters may equally be blamed for. However, as seen in Achebe's *TFA*, there were precolonial notions of trauma which the colonialists should not be blamed for. The introduction of the English language by the colonialists meant that African languages were relegated to the background (Ngugi, 1986: 6-9). Ngugi (1986) and other writers like Achebe (1958) reveal how colonisation compromised African identities with regards to clothing, food, education, laws, customs, music and dance. The texts also mention that colonialists moved into the centre of the nation as perceived in events in Achebe's *TFA* (1958) and Ngugi's accounts in The Decolonisation of the Mind reflecting how Africans were relegated to the background or 'the periphery' (Ngugi, 1986: 16-17) as also reflected in the created plays in this research.

The centre-periphery concept which is adopted as a playwriting framework in this research highlights several scenarios similar to those in Achebe's *TFA* to reveal

how the Africans and the European colonialists were positioned. Achebe (2014: 168-173) also touched on how the colonialists controlled the people by restructuring how the people related to one another; denoting lack of trust. This element would be a main determining factor for the success of the Colonialists, sinking the kindred-camaraderie that existed before the coming of the colonialists as seen in the explored postcolonial texts. In Achebe's account (1958) and as discussed in the Literature Review, some of the people protested; some were punished for protesting, disgraced and even killed. According to Herbst, 'European models' precipitated the state of confusion experienced today as reflected in texts showing neo-colonialist activities across Africa (2012).

1.9 When the colonialists 'left' Africa

I have continued to argue that the scenario of Achebe's *TFA* is not sufficient to determine the activities of the colonialists in my part of Africa. However, the balance created by Soyinka's *DKH* is helpful for picturing notions of trauma from two nations, the Igbo and the Yoruba nations. Adegbami and Uche (2016: 37) reflected on the notion that, although the colonialists left, they only left partially, leaving indigenous folks behind as colonial administrators. These are the same sort of administrators seem working with the colonialists in Achebe's *TFA*. Adegbami and Uche further pointed out that these were either educated elites or uneducated or half-educated middlemen and Chiefs who were supposed to have roles that probably exposed the collectives to poverty and pain. I would argue that the empowerment of such individuals among the collectives may have precipitated their negative actions. This may also be seen in the activities of such a minority in Kenya from Ngugi's perspective. (1986). Also, some of these minorities who were sent abroad to learn the ways of the colonialists were expected to come back to the nation to continue with the policies of the colonialists, inferred from Olunde's perception of the plans of the colonialists (*DKH*, 1998: 54-55). The perception of the nature of the officials taking over from the

colonialists may not be cast in a positive light. The following account in *TFA* is indicative of the negative perception: 'On the morning after the village crier's appeal the men of Umuofia met in the market-place and decided to collect without delay two hundred and fifty bags of cowries to appease the white man. They did not know that fifty bags would go to the court messenger, who had increased the fine for that purpose' (1958: 175). The question therefore is, could the action of the Court Clerk be a precursor to corruption in the 'Independent nation of Nigeria? Moreover, could that be a major influence in the running of the government and possible reason why many folks would decide to emigrate to urban areas and western nations as indicated in the created plays, *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*? The following quote from the Unknown Voice in *The Endless Walk* substantiates the notion of poor governance in the imagined nation: 'If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?' This therefore corroborates the notion that when the colonialists left the shores of the imagined nation, the collectives were left in a worse state.

1.10 Exploring the terms Colonialism and Coloniality

According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, Colonialism refers to 'the period of European expansion and dominion of racialized others' (Tiffin, 2013: 39) traceable to many nations of the world including parts of Africa. With the notion of domination came the 'justification for exploitation and domination of the other' (2013: 39) which is perceived in the testimonies and narratives in the explored postcolonial texts. Coloniality is associated with the lingering effect of Colonialism. Quoting Escobar (2007: 179-210) and Quijano, (2000: 342) Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2013: 128) reflects on Colonialism as a direct Colonialist administration set over a people; whilst Coloniality is related to the 'long standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of Colonialism' (128). Ndlovu-Gatsheni continued by suggesting that 'Coloniality lies in the centre of the modern/colonial world of

yesterday and today where Europe and America are at the apex of global power hierarchy, and Africa is at the bottom' (2013: 128). This confirms the notion of the centre and periphery (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 43) highlighted in the created plays and corroborated in the Literature review in the second Chapter.

Said, Bhabha, and Spivak provide varied perspectives on colonialist activities (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 204-2015). It is through such varied perspectives that the critical and creative perspectives of postcolonial trauma may be understood. The 'post' in post-colonialism refers to activities in the era of independence; though the notion of independence is questionable, seeing that the exegesis and created plays in this study give the impression that the nations of Africa are still strongly under the influence of colonialist domination (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 128). It is within that context of knowing about the strength in colonialist activities that the created plays and exegesis continue to reflect the pain reflected in postcolonial trauma. The creative reflection of the pain in praxis is an attempt to confront and reverse insidious colonialist voices within colonialist structures in Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). The new plays constitute a new fronting of decolonisation, capable of making relevant meaning within Africa and the diaspora. This is important because decolonisation is perceived as a movement associated with 'revealing' and 'dismantling' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 73) images of colonialism as reflected in the exegesis and the created plays associated with the effects of colonialism and coloniality. The exegesis and praxis corroborate trauma notions and colonialist exploitation reflected by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 7) and Ngugi. (1994).

Basil Davidson (2014) suggests that indigenous people renowned with cultures that define Africans as individuals and collectives may be seen in the context of the centre. This is corroborated by Sirayi opinion, (2012: 168) of typical activities associated with the strength of the centre; like, who opines African art, music, dance, proverbs, wise-sayings, medicines, jokes, folklore, including evidence of

pre-colonial African theatre; reflecting a sense of embedded identities which explored sources suggest were disrupted as a result of colonialism in Africa.

Emenyonu and Nnolim (2014: 178) stated that, though pre-colonial Africa had internal conflicts and differences like other ethnic groups in the universe, there were ways and means of reaching resolutions. This is corroborated in *TFA* (Achebe, 1958: 17), where people in Igbo land had their own worldview before European colonialists orchestrated things to fall apart (Achebe, 1958) as a result of colonialist activities. Ngugi had a similar perspective with Achebe (1958) in *Decolonising the Mind* (1988: 10) reflecting an African pre-colonial model of identity dislocated by the colonialists.

From the above account, it is possible to imagine a reflection of the African pre-colonial context, and how trauma may be inferred in the imagined nation and the created plays in this research. However, some important perspectives in Ngugi's background are worth knowing; though not an excuse for his language choice in writing. First, he was 'born into a large peasant family: father, four wives and about twenty-eight children. I also belonged, as we all did in those days, to a wider extended family and to the community as a whole.' Thus, from the onset, he spoke 'Gikuyu' with his family. Like my experience in my part of Africa, he was exposed to storytelling which presumably was in his native language. Some of the folktales he mentioned have similar motifs and characters like those in my part of Africa, showing the inter-relationships among nations of Africa.

However, all that changed, as in Achebe's account in *TFA*, where things fell apart in his native Kenya, reflected as cultural disruptions in East Africa by Ngugi. (1988: 10). The images reflected by Ngugi (1988) and later in Basil Davidson's accounts on West Africa before the colonialists came to Africa (2014) highlights what might be reflected as 'the greatness of Africa' when compared to other universal contexts; suggesting that the colonialists should have left Africa alone on its path

of development. In reflecting on the 'Hamitic myth' Fyle, points out that it is assumed that Africans were not capable of making any 'contribution to the progress of human society... that any element of progress observed in Africa historically was brought there by people of Caucasoid descent' (1999: 2). Fyle (1999: 3-6) controverted that notion by citing examples of development in Africa before the coming of European colonialists. Such developmental signposts are perceived in the role of mythology and religion (1999: 6), the notion that 'some African societies apart from Egypt did develop their own systems of writing' (Fyle, 1999: 4).

It in intriguing to know Fyle's position (1999: 4); that 'some cultures utilized the Arabic script to devise their own writing patterns,' citing the Swahilis and the Fulani. He also pointed out that although 'the majority of African cultures had no system of writing…such cultures had a way of preserving their history through oral tradition' where history was preserved by the deliberate handing down of information 'through generations' from the aged father for instance to the youngest sons 'who came to possess much of the traditions, drummed into their heads through constant repetitions' (Fyle, 1999: 4). What is inferred from Fyle and many other accounts not mentioned here is that there were ordered systems in place before the advent of the colonialists in Africa, which may have been disrupted by the colonialists. This suggests the loss of cultures, traditions and identity; necessitating the need to understand why trauma is identified in the postcolonial texts explored. Edward Said postulated about the the past being related to the present as he says:

Appeals to the past are among the commonest of strategies in interpretations of the present. What animates such appeals is not only disagreement about what happened in the past and what the past was, but uncertainty about whether the past is really past, over and concluded, or whether it continues, albeit in different

forms. The problem stirs all sorts of discussions – about influence, about blame and judgement, about present actualities and future priorities (Culture and Imperialism, 1994, 1).

Said's notion of the past is relevant to me as a playwright, like other background information in this Chapter; reflecting that the traumatic condition is a reality in the imagined nation and the created plays. He opined that the past is supposedly gone, but ideas from the past are still useful for understanding present day realities. In other words, although, the contexts reflected in pre-colonial Africa are consigned to the past, they are perceived as the parameters by which the effect of trauma is measured in Africa in the present as seen in the created plays. Such issues are useful for a meaningful juxtaposition of the past and the present; and knowing about the impact of trauma associated with colonialist activities in Africa.

1.11 The impact of Cultural Associations and Colonialist Myths

The impact of cultural associations is being examined here in the light of their activities during the colonial and postcolonial era. According to Simone and Abouhani, such cultural groups like the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, the National Council of Nigerian citizens and the Berom Progressive Congress were 'constructed to serve the public interests of different ethnic and cultural groups' (2005: 210). Lentz, C (1995: 320) pointed out that, 'tribalism,' or ethnic bias was invented by the colonialists and that it was complex and built on the 'we group processes' which the cultural groups are represented. This is interpreted in the sense that they encouraged specific ethnic groupings, like the Yorubas, Hausas, Igbos, and others. Simone and Abouhani further suggested that the backdrop for tensions, differences and pain was already encouraged in the colonialist era through the creation of such associations that were antecedents for internal conflicts within the nation (Simone, A. and Abouhani, A. Dakar 2005: 215).

On the impact of colonial myth, Boudraa and Krause, pointed out that 'self-aggrandizing myth, the mission civilisatrice' was advanced as a justification for the colonisation of North Africa and beyond (Boudraa and Krause, 2009: 105). This is viewed as a catalyst for the precipitation of trauma in parts of Africa. French officials used this myth to perpetuate 'violent conquests and settlement of overseas territories as part of a larger moral duty to elevate indigenous populations encountered to the status of civility' (Boudraa, N. and Krause, J. 2009: 105).

The underlining question would be, was Africa without elements of civility at this time, or was colonialist exploitation the central reason for the elevation to civility? Ndlovu-Gatsheni, points to the transgenerational effects of such myths, which is capable of permeating the psyches of the African, suggesting traumatic outcomes, which he believes are associated with the crises and conflicts experienced in the African continent (2013: 100). Therefore, such crises and conflicts may be seen as outcomes of the negative colonialist activities in Africa generally, and my part of Africa specifically. Moreover, it would not be farfetched to mention that the images of trauma in the created plays in this research are also related to effects of colonisation mentioned by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 100).

1.12 How trauma is construed within an oppressed African nation and the created plays (See Figure 1.4 and Figure 1.5)

Figure 1.4

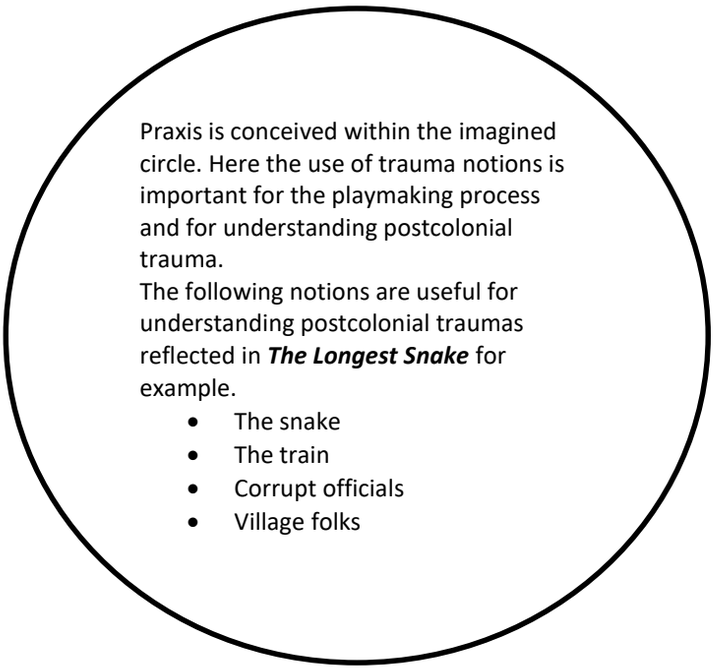
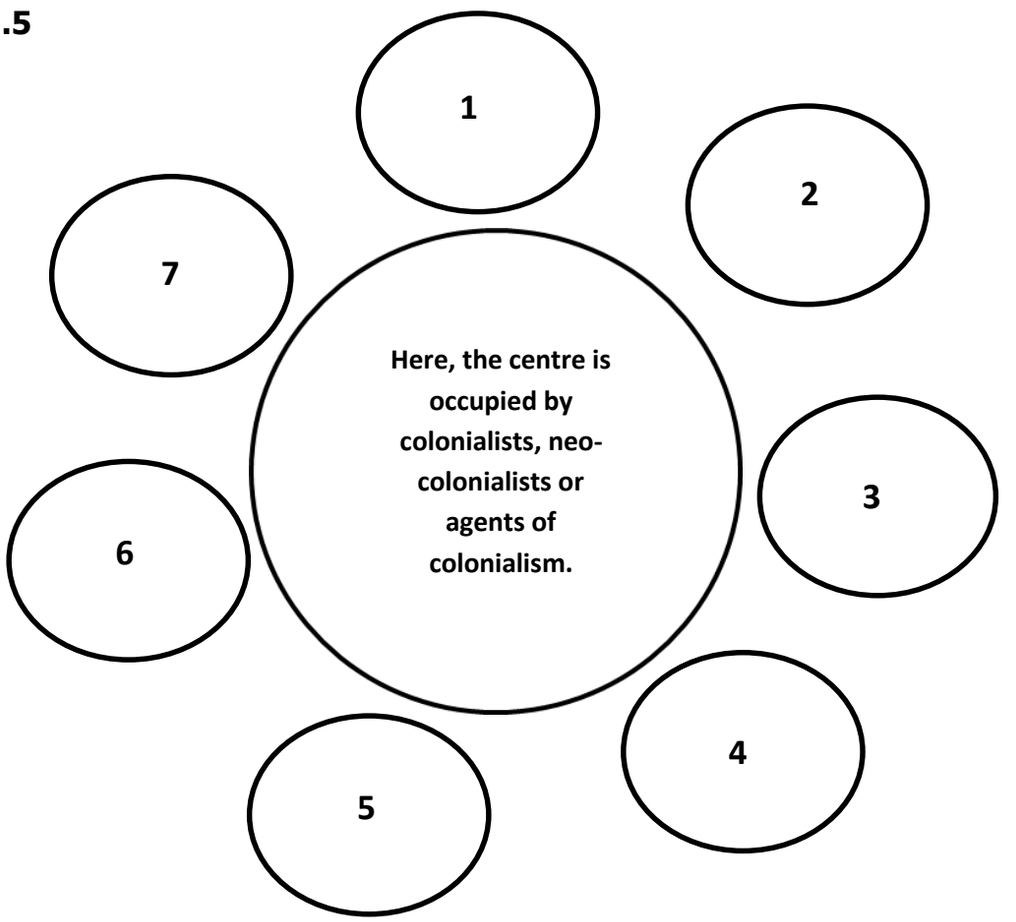


Figure 1.5



In Figure 1.5, the big circle represents the centre, while the smaller circles represent the periphery. (See the exploration of some key concepts in postcolonialism).

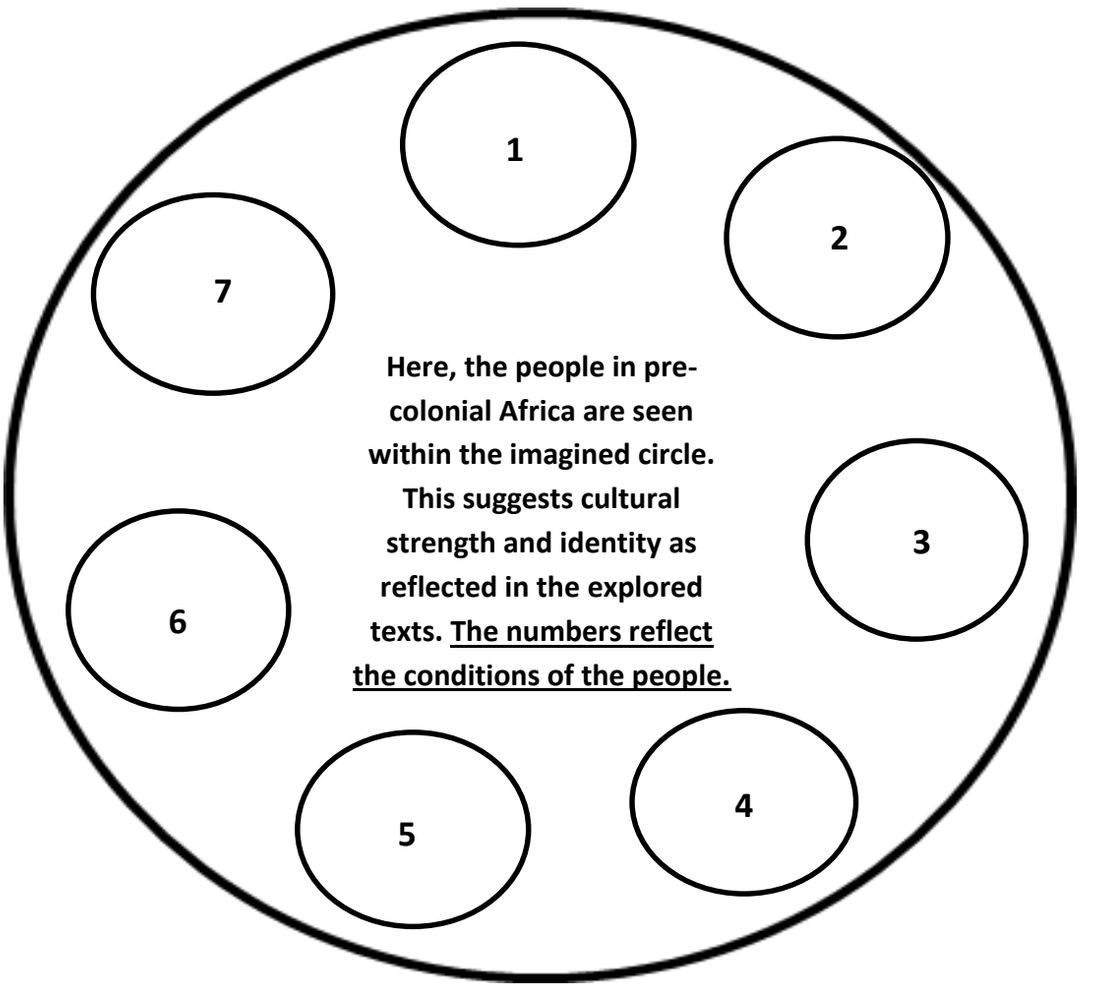
1. Low self-esteem may be associated with dependency – as a reason why the characters in the created plays may have left their homes in my part of Africa to depend on others.
2. Poor development may be associated with neo-colonialism in the sense that some of the explored sources refer to neo-capitalist unfair deals in Africa.
3. Emigration may be associated with postcolonial trauma in the sense that it is not impossible for the state of mind of the collectives to be altered as a result of the strange activities of the colonialists.
4. Lack of confidence may be associated with negative imperialist activities; especially in situations where Africans had to drop their native language and their identities to embrace strange cultures that are likely to affect them as perceived in the created plays.
5. Corruption may be associated with colonialism I the sense that the colonised may not have been adequately prepared politically for the roles they later assumed; thus precipitating corruption.
6. Continuous oppression of the collectives may be associated with Coloniality in the sense of the continuous activities of the colonialists as seen in some of the explored sources in this research..
7. Poor health-care and well-being may be associated with Neo-Colonialism as perceived in the created plays where the characters blamed all their problems on the colonialists, forgetting that they also have to take some of the blame.

1.13 Postcolonial Trauma and the imagined African nation (See: Figure 1.5)

Based on the information in the created play, *The Endless Walk*, the notion that trauma has a capacity of lingering for generations may be corroborated. Thus, individuals and collectives may be affected in different ways (as perceived in the analysed texts). For example, *The Endless Walk* depicts the notion that many Africans take the risk to travel through the Sahara Desert to work in colonialist nations as economic migrants, running towards the same colonialist nations linked with their problems; which is analogous to dependency. From another perspective,

the smaller circles represent traits of colonial oppression like, forced taxation, forced labour - instituted by the neo-colonialists and agents of neo-colonialism. This means that the intention of the coloniser and the agents of the coloniser is different from what the colonised anticipates within the imagined nation.

Figure 1.6



1.14 Chapter Summary

In this Chapter, I have explored some key concepts in postcolonialism for the purpose of knowing and understanding postcolonial trauma in Africa. As contextual features for engaging the exegesis and writing the plays, they are also useful for corroborating the notions of trauma in the explored postcolonial texts and the created plays. When juxtaposed with trauma notions in the postcolonial texts explored, the notion of trauma is established in the context of the imagined nation. The concepts also go a long way to bringing meaning or understanding to

praxis and the dramatic focus. Apart from briefly highlighting the content of the Chapters, the introductory Chapter also highlights the questions that guided the exploratory process.

Praxis Window 2

Excerpts from praxis and indicative of stimulus

Play 1	**First Person:** Call the Chief – they are taking the whole land. **First Official:** (Looking through the equipment of the Surveyor and shaking his head). Hmm, all the trees and all the houses must go. **First Person:** Call the Chief. You cannot do this to us. **Second Official:** Once again, we know what we are doing and we serve the Crown of England. You cannot stop us from our task or we shall summon you all to court. (The Chief arrives as the villagers bow and greet him whilst the Officials are still defiant) **The Chief:** Bring the finest palmwine for it is the dry season and the men must be tired from their long journey. Sing a lovely tune that will remind them of goodness and joy. **First Official:** Thanks Chief, you speak the language that brings joy and peace to the heart. This is the sort of language we want to hear. **The Chief:** Serve the drink and let the women begin to cook the finest foods. (The officials begin to drink and laugh). **First Official:** With due respect to your highness, this equipment sometimes sees things differently when you speak to it differently. **The Chief:** What is it seeing now? **First Officer:** (The officer comically swings the equipment to different areas and he gets to a particular area, the people scream and wail and when it passes, the people rejoice).	**Progression of Praxis** **Typical quotes reflected below from *TFA* are useful to engaging conceptualisation. So outlines of the play reflect the pain embedded in the primary texts See: Achebe, *TFA* and Soyinka, *DKH*.**
Play 2	**1st Man:** We thought we could do something. That since the politicians had stored most of the billions belonging to the country in foreign banks; we could as well travel to those countries to find a way out of poverty. After all, they are strong nations economically. We just decided to travel, telling our parents and relatives that we were going up north to do some business. With our little knowledge of Geography, we thought that there would be no need to ask questions. At least we knew that Spain was not too far from the edge of Africa. Mind you, we were not the first to embark on this sort of trip. Many others had done so. The few that succeeded sent coloured pictures back home and we have never heard from many others who did not succeed.	Trauma is inferred from the harsh conditions in the nation. Reflecting on how the nation has been exploited and decimated by the colonialists. (See Achebe, 1958). But the conditions at home would not be compared to the terrible heat of the Sahara. Why are many not seen again? Could they have died mysteriously? There is the painful notion of wandering into the unknown.

Chapter Two

A Review of Literary sources that corroborate Praxis (Literature Review)

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter is generally expository. It opens the discussion on postcolonial trauma by exploring two primary texts associated with the activities of colonialists in parts of Africa, with my part of Africa, Nigeria being the main focus. This exposition enables me to get clarification on postcolonial trauma based on what is revealed about the individuals and collectives within the imagined nation represented in this instance by the Igbo and Yoruba nations. Moreover, as a playwright, I am learning about trauma in the pre-colonial and postcolonial perspectives as revealed in Achebe's account in *TFA*; thus, putting the plays I am writing in this research within the centre-periphery frame, and reflecting on happenings in the imagined nation.

2.2 Exploration of *Things Fall Apart and Death* and *The King's Horseman*

Introduction: *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Death and the King's Horseman* (1998) and other postcolonial texts bring understanding about postcolonial trauma. This is through the embedded notions of trauma in the texts that explain the conditions of individuals and collectives associated with negative colonialist activities. It is such trauma notions associated with postcolonial trauma that are reflected in the created plays. From another perspective, this Chapter explains various issues related to the traumatisation of Africans by the colonialists as seen in the exegesis and also corroborated in the created plays.

2.3 *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

Achebe's *TFA* is a narrative that is focussed on a single character, Okonkwo, a great character in the Igbo nation. Bascom describes him as a victim of 'hubris' that fails to defend his ethnic group from colonial invaders (Bascom, 2015: 74), not considering that the invaders had superior weapons (Tsaaior, 2013: 54).

Orobator sees things differently, blaming 'missionary hubris' for the confrontation that cost Okonkwo his life 'and the soul of his people' (2008: 19), a notion that I totally agree with; not forgetting that the Igbo people also had their foibles associated with how other characters are badly treated. I am able to identify with the traumatic misfortune that befell Okonkwo because this is similar to traumatic instances anecdotally reflective of some Esan African folktales. This trauma spread to members of his community, suggesting 'collective trauma' (Alexander, 2013: 1, Eyerman, Alexander and Breese, 2011: xx-xxi). J.L. Watts, quoting William Ferris, (1973) describes the experiences in the text, encompassing the nation of Igbos as "the full horror of colonialism" (2010: 66) meaning that colonialism was traumatic to the individuals and the collectives as revealed in the experiences of the Igbo nation in *TFA*. As a result of the confusion between the colonialists and the hitherto revered elders, (who held strongly to their traditions in *TFA*), the pain associated with the loss of identity is revealed as facilitated by the activities of local agents or 'compradors' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 61) who supported and worked with the colonialists to challenge, undermine and 'compromise the independence' (2013, 62) of the Igbo nation. Thus, it is in the failings of the Igbo nation that the traumatic underpinnings of the plays I created in this research may be understood.

Rather than blame Okonkwo's failure on his personal weaknesses, Ahmed An-Naim, blamed the colonialists for 'meddling' (Ahmed An-Naim, 2009: 173). Consequently, Okonkwo commits suicide 'rather than accept physical and spiritual surrender' (2009: 173). Okonkwo's 'fear of failure' as reflected in *TFA* is seen as the axis of trauma as reflected by Ifowodo; (2013: xiv) although Yusuf Bangura's reference to Mazrui's notion of 'self-colonisation' gives the impression that trauma reflected in the Igbo society is self-inflicted (2015: 329) (Mazrui, A. 2005: 257). Such schools of thought on self-colonisation point to the traumatic killing of the ill-fated Ikemefuna (who saw Okonkwo as his father) (Achebe, 2010: 57-59) as well as the

heavy-handedness of Okonkwo on his wives and first son Nwoye, who later joined the band of Christians in Umuofia (*TFA*, 1958: 135). These examples show that although there were inherent traumatic elements in the Igbo nation, Ifowodo believes that the Igbos felt trapped in a colonialist state, which is described as, 'a shattering historical trauma' (2013: xiii). Such shattering historical trauma is identified in the actions of the colonialists and the reactions of the Africans in *TFA* (1958: 176-182). The traumatic events surrounding Okonkwo and his fellow Chiefs when they were remanded in custody and subsequently disgraced by the court messengers in *TFA* (1958: 171-176) reflects the pains and the denigration of the Igbo nation, perceived as 'a paradigm of traditional African societies' (Oyekan, Owomoyela, 1993: 18). There was also the pain of the illegal fines imposed by the corrupt court officials in *TFA* , which reveals how corruption is traced to the court of the colonialists (1958: 175). Although Okpewho (2003: 93) also sees Okonkwo's actions in *TFA* as hubris, Bascom is more sympathetic as he exonerates Okonkwo by reiterating that the colonialists defiled the Igbo nation and infringed upon their space (2015: 74-75). Bhabha believes that Okonkwo's defence of his ethnic group is considered a national act of patriotism, similar to what nations are known to do when invaded by a foreign nation (Bhabha, 1990: 19). Okonkwo's friend, Obierika, reiterates such act of patriotism and national defence in *TFA*, by saying,

> That man was one of the greatest men in Umuofia. You drove him to kill himself; and now he will be buried like a dog (Achebe, 1958: 185).

From Obierika's thoughts, (*TFA,* 1958: 185) the metaphorical reference to Okonkwo as one to be buried as a dog shows how an important individual in the community had fallen from a point of recognition to a point of degradation, perceived as a traumatic situation. From a collective perspective, Achebe (*TFA*, 1958) suggests that trauma hung all over the Igbo nation; and the Igbo nation was deeply pained as revealed in Obierika's speech (Achebe, 1958: 158) meaning

that, 'the white man' being the colonialists did not ' understand our custom about land? How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad.' Worse still, the real catalyst of change and trauma in the Igbo nation was not only the colonialists, but, 'our own brothers who have taken up his religion' who have also joined the colonialist to say 'that our customs are bad.' So the rhetorical question that Obierika posed was: 'How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us?' so he suddenly realises that 'the white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one.' That is where things actually fell apart because the white man had, 'put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.' These notions expressed in this exposition or the whole text may also be viewed from a similar perspective by the characters in *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*, who may partially blame the colonialists and themselves for the ills in the imagined nation.

Obierika's speech also shows the subtlety of the colonialists; accentuating the argument that the white man orchestrated division in the Igbo nation. *TFA* (1958) shows instances where the coming of the colonialists brought great pain to the individuals and collectives in the Igbo nation. The idea of things 'falling apart' shows that the Igbo nation crumbled into a state of anarchy, as reflected in the conversation between Okonkwo and his friend Obierika (Achebe, 1958: 155-158); however, a careful reflection of core Igbo traditional beliefs and activities in the text would reveal that the Igbo nation was also to blame.

Bhabha confirms the traumatic notions in the previous paragraph as he perceives the Igbo collective as a nation with a 'soul' and 'spiritual principle' (1990: 19) similar to other nations of Africa or the world. Although his argument is one-sided, he further reiterated that such a nation is constituted with authorities and depths

of knowledge that are bound to fall into a state of trauma if disorganised by another nation (1990: 19). Bhabha suggests that although a nation might have internal issues that are traumatic, the coming of another nation could create a deeper wound, especially if there is the element of deliberate disorganisation (1990: 19), which the people in my perception could not fight against because they were incapacitated by their own throes explained earlier. Okonkwo in *TFA* suggests that the Igbo nation should have fought back; but his friend Obierika responded that, 'It is already too late' (1958: 157) reflecting notions and concepts of postcolonialism highlighted in the first Chapter of this research that point to the role of the colonialists in bringing about the traumatic state. Obierika then went on to explain why it was too late. There was the church, the new government, the new law – all initiated by the white man (1958: 156). Obierika continued:

> Our own men and our sons have joined the ranks of the stranger. They have joined his religion and they help to uphold his government. If we should try to drive out the white men in Umuofia, we should find it easy. There are only two of them. But what of our own people who are following their way and have been given power? (*TFA*, 1958: 157).

It is important to note that the white man brought economic progress, because 'he built a trading store and for the first-time palm-oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia' (1958: 159). The new government did not respect or understand the cultures or ways of the people. The District Commissioner is said to have 'judged cases in ignorance,' (1958: 156) and the white man's messenger and interpreter took bribes – precipitating trauma (Achebe, 1958: 157). It is important to know that trauma is inferred from the actions of the colonialists in *TFA* who could not restrain the court officials and prison guards from being high-handed. The court officials molested the prisoners who were men of title and elders in the community. The elders were, 'grieved by the indignity' (1958: 172 -173). Anecdotally mirroring a typical Esan folktale where elders are held in high esteem, such indignity would not be permitted in the first place and would have not been tolerated without a war.

In all these, trauma is visibly manifested; although Mirmotahari, explained that there were other pre-colonialist 'flaws that hastened' the downfall of the Igbos as a nation (Mirmotahari, 2011: 377-378) echoing self-colonisation (Hee, 2015: 2) (Japtok, 2003: 249). The fall of the Igbo nation reflected in *TFA*, is seen in the context of Fanon's notion of the 'medina mentality' (1990: 30) which suggests a sad entrapment of Africans by the colonialists; a notion that is still evident innthe plays I created in this reserach. The understanding created here is the notion that since some Igbos were ostracised (through the caste system) by their fellow Igbos, the impression of worthlessness ascribed to them by other Igbos drove them to embrace the church (Achebe, 1958: 128-145). This gives the impression that the Igbo nation was weakened despite their strong cultural belief system. The 'worthless', 'empty' or 'efulefu' men without titles, (Achebe, 128: 1958) heightened the melancholia or trauma, resulting in the efulefus finding solace in a system or religion that gave them worth and self-expression (Achebe, 1958: 128-145). In taking such bold steps, Okpewho, believes that their actions weakened the Igbo strong traditional base (2003: 41). Okonkwo responded to this by saying: 'How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us?' (1958: 158). Stephen Morton opined that the activities reflected in *TFA* (Achebe, 1958) are closely related to situations in Apartheid South Africa (2013: 90). In the Igbo situation reflected by Achebe in *TFA*, there is the suggestion that the colonialists, also referred to as 'the white man' were ignorant of the cultural system of the Igbo people, reflected in Obierika's speech in *TFA* (Achebe, 1958: 158).

The sentiments expressed in Obierika's speech, mirrors the political instability in Africa, explored in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, pinpointing 'The pitfalls of national consciousness' (Fanon: 1990: 119) painted as a divided society that is metaphorically referred to as an 'empty shell' (1990: 119). That picture of disunity referred to by Fanon helps to facilitate the notion or the effects of 'hybridity and

mimicry' which affected the Igbo national identity. The terms 'hybridity and mimicry' (associated with Homi Bhabha, 2012) explores how the colonised adopted the colonizers 'cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and habits' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2000: 139) which in the context of *TFA* to trauma and cultural dysfunction (Eze, 2011: 44) which are also notions of trauma captured plays created in this research.

The missionaries, who were closely associated with the colonialists displayed ignorance when Enoch, a zealous Christian, unmasked an Igbo masquerade (Bekler, 2014: 101). Rather than chastising Enoch and making peace with the traditional elders, they, the missionaries associated with the colonialists and supported Enoch, their convert. This had a 'shocking effect among the Igbos, who later decide to burn the church and Enoch's house' (*TFA*, 1958: 133-134). Bekler (2014: 101) points out that Enoch's overzealousness 'creates violence and hatred among his people' revealing more trauma. As Okonkwo and some elders are summoned to meet with the District Commissioner, a colonialist and main representative of the Queen and the Colonial British government (Achebe, 1958: 171-172) Bekler, points out that the laws in operation at this stage were not those of the Igbo people' (2014: 101). The question I would like to address in the context of the created plays is that the laws in operation within that context are not favourable to the characters, and the laws may not be associated with their real nation.

Unfortunately, the Igbos were not in control; suggesting great loss and pain, as reflected in events in *TFA* (Achebe, 1958). This is also reflected in the enforcement of 'the laws of the white people, who have come to bring justice to the so-called uncivilized people' (Bekler, 2014: 101). The resultant outcome was the arrest of the elders and the subsequent payment of fines, being fifty bags of cowries (Achebe, 1958: 173). Dejected, Okonkwo decides to fight back; an action

that suggests 'their honour has been injured' (Bekler, 2014: 101) This confirms Outka's (2013: 89) notion that a subservient nation in that context would be open to oppression, confirming the pain of subservience reflected by Losambe and Sarinjeive (2001: 17-18, 21-26).

2.4 Summary and key points in *TFA*

a. Events in *TFA* show that the Igbo nation did exist with laws that distinguish them as a nation of people (Bekler, 2014: 101).

b. *TFA* shows that there was a strong bond or connection between the individuals and collectives in a stable cultural system before the coming of the colonialists.

c. Events in *TFA* reflect the oppressive stance of the colonialists, and the inability of Africans to fight back. They could not coordinate appropriately because of their disorganisation.

d. The notion of trauma expressed in *TFA* and this section is useful for understanding the background of trauma reflected in the created plays.

e. The notions of trauma in *TFA* corroborate other views of trauma and sources explored.

f. The notions of trauma explored in *TFA* is seen in the context of notions related to trauma expressed in the first Chapter of this research.

g. The notion of subjugation highlighted in *TFA* shows that the colonialists came purposely to occupy and disrupt the cultural progress of the Igbo nation with their Court of Law and Religion - Christianity.

2.5 *Death and the King's Horseman*

The play, *DKH* by Wole Soyinka is colonially motivated because it is based on the conflict that arose as a result of the imposition of western culture on the people of Yoruba land (Ogunkunle, 2015: 343-344). The text also reflects the notion of identity in Africa (George, 2012: 161) and the content reveals how trauma affects social and cultural issues (Ifowodo, 2013: 16). The plot is centred on a Yoruba

kingdom in which the King's Horseman must commit suicide when the King dies; accompanying the king to the world beyond. This text pinpoints elements of mimicry and hybridity (Ifowodo, 2013: 19) as in *TFA* where the colonialists lacked understanding of African cultural beliefs. (*TFA*, 1958: 172). The characters representing the colonialists in *DKH*, as in *TFA*, probably feigned ignorance that they were standing in the way of tradition as indicated in Olunde's speech:

> You forget that I have now spent four years among your people. I discovered that you have no respect for what you do not understand (*DKH*, 1998: 54-55).

The discovery by Olunde suggests that the colonialists were genuinely ignorant; perhaps feigning ignorance or were deliberately oppressive. A case in point would be seen in the deliberate sending of Olunde, Elesin's son to England to learn the ways of the colonialists (*DKH*, 1998, 29, 38). The sending of the King's son to England suggests a failed attempt by the colonialists to achieve hybridity; suggesting that Olunde was sent to England to be changed through the ways of the colonialists; thereby, inflicting pain on the father who would have lost him to the colonialists (*DKH*, 1998, 29, 38).

Trauma is inferred from the words of Elesin who confronts Pilkings (*DKH*, 1998: 68) saying, 'You stole from me my first born, sent him to your country so you could turn him to something in your own image,' suggests an attempt to dominate the people, thereby hurting the Elesin and the collective Yoruba nation. Barnaby (2014: 15-16) further reveals the extent of trauma in Elesin, the King's Horseman by reflecting how his cultural roles are affected by the intrusion of the colonialists. Barnaby's idea of *DKH*, like Achebe's *TFA* shows the notion of prior cultural stability relative to precolonial Africa before the coming of the colonialists. This notion of trauma is perceived in Elesin's speech suggesting, the weakness of the Yoruba nation and the oppressive nature of the colonialists. Trauma is also inferred as defilement of the Yoruba nation as indicated in the following speech.

> There was also a weight of longing on my earth-held limbs. I would have shaken it off, already my foot had begun to lift but then, the white ghost entered and all was defiled (*DKH*, 1998: 71).

At this point, trauma is inferred from the Elesin's speech as he says: 'My powers deserted me. My charms, my spells, even my voice lacked strength when I made to summon the powers that would lead me over the last measure of earth into the land of the fleshless' (*DKH*, 1998: 74). This suggests that Elesin would have fought back had he not lost his will; as he was left 'floundering and blundering in a maze' and his senses numbed (Soyinka, 1998: 74) from which trauma is inferred. Anyanwu points out that Elesin's power which reflects his identity was lost in the maze of the colonialist invasion. Anyanwu also states that the colonialists were ignorant of the 'collectivist' cultural need, reflective of the obstruction of the 'Elesin's rite of passage which 'entail sacrifice' (Anyanwu, 1998: 154). As inferred from the dialogue that follows, the colonialists assumed they had the duty to protect the ethnic group:

ELESIN: The night is not at peace, ghostly one. The world is not at peace. You have shattered the peace of the world for ever. There is no sleep in the world tonight.
PILKINGS: It is still a good bargain if the world should lose one night's sleep as the price of saving a man's life.
ELESIN: You did not save my life, District Officer. You destroyed it.
PILKINGS: Now come on . . .
ELESIN: And not merely my life but the lives of many. The end of the night's work is not over. Neither this year nor the next will see it. If I wished you well, I would pray that you do not stay long enough on our land to see the disaster you have brought upon us.
PILKINGS: Well, I did my duty as I saw it. I have no regrets.
ELESIN: No. The regrets of life always come later.

(*DKH*, 1998: 67-68).

From the Elesin's point of view, the society was grieved as he says: 'You did not save my life, District Officer. You destroyed it…And not merely my life but the lives of many' suggesting collective trauma (Alexander, 2013: 1). To the colonialists, such an act would be construed as a crime against the people or the state; but to Elesin and his community, the denial of Elesin's inferred 'sacred duty' (Soyinka,

1998: 67-68) is perceived as deliberate emasculation. The dialogue portrays traumatic elements because it would be seen that a greater power was trying to undermine a lesser power by making mockery of an African who had his culture to protect (*DKH,* 1998: 67-68). The dialogue portrays conflict between the colonialist world and the world view of the Yorubas. The power struggle in the dialogue is indicative of the notion that none was willing to submit to the other. (*DKH*, 1998, 67-68). Soyinka, suggests that they do not understand each other's perceptions or refuse to accept each other's worldview. This deep-seated conflict between two worlds, is seen differently by Soyinka, who points out the notion of culture-clash and the colonialist perspective should be seen differently from what is assumed (Bello, 2016: 49-51). Soyinka's position in this argument is not clear because the notion of culture-clash depicted in *TFA*. Bello (2016: 49-51) points out that in the play, *DKH*, Soyinka presents the 'disintegration and confusion let upon the people by the white man's interference with tradition' (Bello, 2016: 50). Soyinka's perspective is seen through the following interview with Anthony Appiah: (Jeyifo and Prenshaw, 2001: 132).

> **Appiah:** I'd like to talk a little about *Death and the King's Horseman*. Is this a political play, or would you rather read it as relatively apolitical?
>
> **Soyinka:** Of course there's politics in *Death and the King Horseman*. There's the politics of colonization, but it is very peripheral. The action, the tragedy of Death and the King's Horseman could have been triggered off by circumstances which have nothing to do with the colonial factor – that's very important to emphasize. So it is political in a very peripheral sense. The colonial factor, as I insist, is a merely catalytic event. But the tragedy of a man who fails to fulfil an undertaking is a universal tragedy.

Soyinka obviously underplayed the colonialist contribution to the traumatic event in the Yoruba nation; of which the colonial impute is not peripheral from my point of view. Whereas the 'catalytic' role of the colonialists cannot be denied, their obvious role in impeding an ongoing tradition and implanting their worldview should be perceived beyond the perspective of 'universal tragedy' by Wole Soyinka. It would be seen that Soyinka failed to lay the blame of colonialist oppression at

the door step of the colonialists whose mark of oppression may also be seen in their negative activities in Achebe's *TFA*. Even the Praise-singer resonated the traumatic times in Yoruba history; blaming the colonialist factor rather than the universal factor purported by Soyinka, who in a way contradicted his own perception of the colonialist activities as 'our world wrenched from its true course' meaning that things also fell apart in that African nation, and the colonialists are to blame. The Praise Singer puts things succinctly thus:

> In their time the great wars came and went, the little wars came and went; the white-slavers came and went, they took the heart away of our race, they bore away the mind and muscle of our race. The city [Oyo] fell and was rebuilt; the city fell and our people trudged through mountain and forest to found a new home but . . . our world was never wrenched from its true course (*DKH*, 1998: 8-9).

The bitterness in Elesin's heart would be revealed in the thoughts of the praise singer, who shortly before Elesin kills himself, ironically wonders why their champion failed them woefully as he said: 'Elesin, we placed the reins of the world in your hands yet you watched it plunge over the edge of the bitter precipice' meaning that a traditionally constituted authority failed the collectives as perceived in the imagery reflected in that speech. Moreover, he said: 'You sat with folded arms while evil strangers tilted the world from its course and crashed it beyond the edge of emptiness' Obviously, the blame is laid at the doorstep of the colonialists, referred to as, 'evil strangers' whom he said, were responsible for the 'floundering in a blind future' touching on the fact that, their future was unpredictable; because, 'Our world is tumbling in the void of strangers (*DKH*, 1998: 82-83); note that strangers (colonialists) are to blame once again, indicative of Soyinka not being honest about the real cause of trauma in *DKH*.

The perception here is that the colonialists carried on their business as usual but a whole Yoruba nation wallowed in pain as Olunde says, 'Goodnight. I can see you are shocked by the whole business. But you must know by now there are things you cannot understand – or help' (Soyinka, 1998: 63) which suggests that a depth

of cultural consciousness had been tampered with, (as in *TFA* and the plays created in this research) revealing trauma as seen in words and deeds in *DKH*. It would be inferred that Olunde tried to reason with the colonialists, trying to explain that the ways of the Yoruba nation, though superstitious, (as in *TFA*) makes a lot of sense to the Africans, but would never make sense to the colonialists (*DKH*, 1998: 63). It is this same notion of lack of understanding that is reflected in Achebe's *TFA*, where the colonialists disregarded the ethnic and cultural realities of the people by exploiting their differences, suggesting trauma.

2.6 Summary and key points in *DKH*

a. *DKH* also shows a strong connection between individuals and collectives in a stable cultural system before the coming of the colonialists.

b. Events in *DKH* also reflect the oppressive stance of the colonialists – and the inability of Africans to fight the superior power as in *TFA.*

c. The notion of trauma expressed in *DKH* is useful for understanding the background of trauma and understanding the notion of trauma reflected in the created plays.

d. The notions of trauma in *DKH* and *TFA* corroborate notions of trauma in other texts and sources explored.

e. Also, the notions of trauma explored in *TFA* and *DKH* are associated with the first Chapter of this research as undertones of trauma.

f. The notion of subjugation has been highlighted in *DKH* and *TFA* - showing that the colonialists came to occupy and disrupt the cultural progress of both the Igbo and Yoruba nations.

g. In both the Igbo and Yoruba nations and cultures, the Colonialists put the European systems in place through the church, government and Court of Law.

2.7 Reflecting on the depth of trauma in *TFA* and *DKH*

It would be seen that trauma in the context of post-colonialism is juxtaposed with the 'plethora of themes' which Leveton (2010: xviii-xix) described as world-wide pain, in need of healing. In other words, Leveton perceived trauma as a world-wide phenomenon, but fails to see the reality of the African situation as perhaps distinct from other nations of the world. Igweonu and Okagbue for instance mention the 'one-sided' advance of globalisation (2014: 11) which suggests that not much attention is being paid to disadvantages of colonialist inflicted trauma (Bah, 2014: 95).

Whereas colonialism is perceived as the incursion of one political system on another as seen in Achebe's *TFA* (1958), neo-colonialism is perceived as continuing where the colonialists stopped; reflecting pain inflicted directly by former colonialist powers or their agents. Although postcolonialism supposedly reflects events after the advent of colonialism (meaning 'independence') the events reflected in Achebe's text and other texts and sources in this study show that colonialist oppressions have negative transgenerational outcomes in 'postcolonial-cultures' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2006: 9) inferred as the purpose behind the created plays. The same source (2006: 9) refers to possible notions of trauma depicted in literary texts about colonialist 'practices and effects' such as: 'slavery, displacement, emigration, and racial and cultural discrimination' (2006: 9). Akin to traumatic events in Achebe's text, (suggesting trauma), there is the mention of the dearth of black psychology in Africa, as Cooper and Ratele, opined:

> Yet our understanding of what it means to be African depends only on conceptions of material reality grounded in European thought (2014: 89-91).

This notion of loss is associated with 'shattered consciousness and fractured identity' (2014: 89) perceived in the postcolonial texts. In the same context, Ndlovu-Gatsheni stated that, 'envisaged postcolonial dispensation was submerged

and engulfed by the neo-colonial world' (2013: 4) which suggests the perpetuation of trauma by the colonialists. Ndlovu-Gatsheni continued by saying, that, 'the existing neo-colonial world have been panel-beaten into a cul-de-sac' giving a picture of a continent existing in an 'unequal world social order' (2013: 4) despite the notion that Africa had existed before the Christian era; (BCE), quoting Muiu and Martin (2009: 191) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 5). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 8-9) rehashed forms of Coloniality, reflecting traumatic experiences. Firstly, he mentioned the 'Coloniality of power' (2013: 8) which enunciates the continuity of 'colonial mentalities, psychologies, and world-views' steeped in exploitation and domination steeped in 'colonial expansion' (2013: 8). Secondly, there is the notion of 'Coloniality of knowledge' (2013: 8) revealing the 'epistemological questions of how colonial modernity interfered with African modes of knowing' – 'a replacement with Eurocentric epistemologies' (2013: 8). He also reflected on the 'Coloniality of being' which explains the notions of 'dehumanization and depersonalisation of colonized Africans' (2013: 8). Within the notion of Coloniality of being, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 8) also reflected on colonialist instigated trauma-based on violence, war, rape, diseases, death, reflecting notions of various Latin American and African theorists and scholars like Mignolo (2007), Quijano (2007), Grosgoguel (2007), Maldonado (2007), Muiu (2009), Escobar (2007), all highlighting similar images of happenings in *TFA*.

The notion of colonialism and imperialism (Loomba, 2015: 19), are perceived as reflecting the role played by the colonialists within the context of *TFA* and beyond; touching on the negative effects of obvert and covert oppressions which may be trans-generational – as reflected in the created plays. Andermahr and Pillicer-Ortin's (2013: 31) notion of physical or psychological injury or wound is associated with colonialist activities reflected in *TFA*. Like Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 8) they also reflected on slavery, racism, forced migration and segregation. Such trauma - related experiences are perceived as potential signposts for understanding trauma

in this study. This goes a long way to explain how trauma in *TFA* is juxtaposed with issues related to African cultural identity, progression and development. Apart from the problem of slavery which depleted Africa and caused untold suffering (Murphy, L.T. 2012: 2) incidents pinpointed in *TFA* are understood within the context of Bojana Coulibaly's article '(Re) Defining the Self through Trauma in a West African Postcolonial Short Fiction':

> Hence, the narrative as it is widely understood takes a prescriptive role, which teaches members of society to deal with traumatic experiences of colonisation, war, and socio-political and economic tyranny. In the same way, West African postcolonial short fiction offers modes of resistance to trauma that guide readers to a better understanding of their traumatic situation and helps them to heal through their trauma. (Nwosu and Obiwu, ed, 2015: 96).

Events in *TFA* echo Eze's (2011: 31) perception of Africa's wound or pain; from which one may appreciate the post-colonialist notion of the wound, injury and damage as posited by Caruth (1996: 4), Alexander (2013) and Craps (2013: 14). The notion of the wound becomes clearer as Becker (2014: 146) associates it with 'emotional, physical and psychological trauma.' It is not within the scope of this study to ascertain the depth of the emotional and psychological perspectives of the wound. Through the notion of memory (Mengel & Bozaga, 2012: 352-353) and the accounts related as stories, it is possible to envisage fragments of trauma in Africa, linked to the universality of trauma. This means that trauma is applicable to all cultures; meaning that, what is traumatic in one culture may be similarly traumatic in another. As perceived in Bonacker and Safferling's experience of trauma as 'our shared humanity' (2013: 73). This is related to Kurtz's (2014: 426) notion of trauma as 'physical injury' or 'psychological disorder,' as inferred in *TFA* (1958). Udoye, (2011: 93) brings a different perspective in which he states that trauma in Africa could be associated with superstition; referring to good and bad spirits. This negates Andermahr and Pillicer-Ortin's notion of colonialist trauma (2013: 31). Within the context of Udoye's (2011: 93) superstitious perspective, it would be inferred that political or economic issues were attributed to destiny or

acts of gods. The Igbos projected by Achebe, emphasise the worth of the personal god, *chi* (Achebe, 1975: 93-103) (Ijatuyi-Morphe, R. 2014: 191) or the notion of destiny among the Yorubas of which Chrambo and Makokha (2013: 208) give clear explanations. Achebe's notion in *TFA* that, 'A man could not rise beyond the destiny of his *chi' (*1958: 117) seems to de-emphasise colonialist trauma, making it seen that whatever happened in that era was destined to be.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni's two articles, 'In the snare of Colonial Matrix of power' and 'Myths of Decolonisation and Illusions of Freedom' (2013: 37-65) reflect on colonialist and imperialist exploitation of African superstitious consciousness, by making the western way of life more attractive; and also creating the impression that the western way of life was 'the only gate-way to power, dignity and full humanism' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni's 2013: 50). It would be assumed that the impression created is understood as what Ana Monteiro-Ferreira (2014: 61-62) identifies as adopting a 'superior culture,' also reflected in Achebe's *TFA*. In the Preface to, *Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth*, Jean-Paul Sartre, creates an image of Ndlovu-Gatsheni's 'Myths of Decolonisation and Illusions of Freedom' (2013: 37-65) as he says: The European *elite* undertook to manufacture a native *elite*. They picked our promising adolescents; they branded them, as with red hot iron, with the principles of western culture; they stuffed their mouth full with high-sounding phrases, grand glutinous words that stuck to the teeth. After a short stay in the mother country they were sent home, whitewashed (Fanon, 7: 1990). Thus, the plays I created in this research and the characters reflected may be perceived in the context of the 'whitewashed' who are not sent home, but walking towards the homes of those who once colonised them. Where the 'whitewashed' was not running towards the nations of those who colonised them , they are seen in *The Longest Snake* running away from their natural habitat to colonialist projects.

2.8 Mirroring Trauma as the 'wound' of the Nation

The purpose of this part in this Chapter is to explore some non-literary sources as background for explaining notions of trauma expressed in the literary sources explored earlier in the Chapter. This section is an attempt to juxtapose *TFA* and *DKH* against other textual sources that would explain postcolonial trauma. Firstly, Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth,* alludes to the 'common destiny' shared by African nations and 'the people's struggle for freedom' (1990: 188 and 189). This text is important in this review because it reflects the background to colonialist oppression in Africa. It also reflects the issues that mirror trauma in Africa and how such issues are viewed from the individual and collective perspectives – touching on notions like, 'common destiny' and 'struggle for freedom' mentioned previously. This is related to Klein's notion, stating that suffering necessitates action; reflecting that pain is logically unpleasant, so sufferers are naturally bound to react (2015: 69-84). In that context, suffering is inextricably tied to the reaction of sufferers as seen in the texts explored by Achebe (1958) and Soyinka (1998) where Okonkwo and Elesin connote examples of individuals within a community with wounds that could not be hidden; but Caruth believes that 'trauma seems to be much more than a pathology or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available (Caruth, 1996: 4), as perceived in the characters of the created plays whose reactions reminds the reader of images of trauma in the explored textual sources.

The above quote may be seen in the context of 'colonial displacement of culture' in Africa posited by Janis (2013: 98, 105). In the two texts explored (Achebe, 1958 and Soyinka, 1998), the Igbo and the Yoruba nations are reflected as nations whose peoples and cultures are displaced by the colonialists. The word 'displaced' is understood as nations being forcefully moved from a familiar cultural zone to an unfamiliar cultural zone. Williams and Chrisman (2015: 12) also relate

to 'continuous post-coloniality' and all instances of neo-colonialism or imperialism in Africa. This suggests that the colonialists have always been in control since they first set their foot in Africa until the present day. The impression created is that even within the twenty first century; life might not have changed for good in Africa. Ndlovu-Gatsheni relates the current state of continuous poverty, deprivation and underdevelopment to Africa's past colonial experiences (2013: 257). This is related to praxis in this study in terms of the created plays deliberately pulling wounded sufferers to the 'centre' - demonstrating decolonisation, healing and possible reconciliation (Mallon, 2012: 192).

Fanon, reflects on the reality of the wound on the collectives as he says: 'national middle class which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime is an under-developed middle class. It has practically no economic power, and in any case, it is in no way commensurate with the bourgeoisie of the mother country it hopes to replace' (Fanon, 1990: 120). This gives the impression that the middle class was not prepared for governance – putting their national independence in doubt. Creary foresaw 'a nominally postcolonial Africa in which the continent would remain largely subjugated within a neo-colonial world order' (2012: 1) which Fanon interpreted as: 'Was my freedom not given to me then in order to build the world of you?' (*Black Skin, White Mask*, Fanon, 1986: 232).

The above discussion points to the necessity of engaging praxis from the point of view of righting identified historical wrongs of assumed colonialist trauma by creating plays that point sufferers towards significant change - as in the use of socio-drama to address the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS in South Africa (Leveton, 2010: 96-101). Such plays would be seen in the context of ameliorating 'the wounds that have been inflicted on the body' (Mengel and Borzaga, 2012: 86). The manifestation is reflected in Fanon's notion of 'unbearable-insularity' or narrow-mindedness (1986, 50-51) which probably drives the African towards a colonialist mind-set, as reflected by Fanon.

> Affect is exacerbated in the Negro, he is full of rage because he feels small, he suffers from an inadequacy in all human communication, and all these chain him with an unbearable insularity…We understand why the black man cannot take pleasure in his insularity. For him there is only one way out, and it leads into the white world. Whence his constant preoccupation with attracting attention of the white man (1986, 50-51).

There is an element of stagnation inferred from Fanon's idea of the negro; meaning that the negro cannot progress without depending on western nations. What is further inferred in Fanon's statement is that there should be an organised effort to move the African to the centre of an imagined circle from the periphery as explored in the introductory Chapter. This is because something has to be done as suggested in this study to tackle Fanon's notion of 'unbearable insularity' (1986, 50-51). This would not have been confronted if the colonialists had not perhaps played on the emotions of the Africans as reflected in Achebe (1958) and Soyinka's accounts (1991). Perhaps this is why Eze pointed out that 'nearly every discussion of Africa's problems and prospects inevitably winds its way to the western assault on Africa' (2011: ix) This is because texts explored in this study intone that things are still falling apart; meaning that many issues that were created or left unresolved by the colonialists are still unresolved. Eze also mentioned that even instances of incompetence, embezzlement and corruption are also seen as 'consequences of some kind of colonial trauma' which is once again related to Chinua Achebe's notion of 'Africa's wound in the soul' (Eze 2011: ix, quoted in the first Chapter). This notion of the wound may also be seen in the context of the complexities of African problems in the light of colonialism and self-colonisation (Hee, 2015: 2) (Japtok, 2003: 249) which may also be seen as the underpinning of the activities of the characters in the created plays in this research.

Equally important to the above are accounts by Loomba, suggesting a continuum of colonialist 'traumatic relationships' (2015: 20) now resurfacing after independence as 'the new global order' (2015: 20) or globalisation. Schreiter also argues that this new dispensation negates the succour and reconciliation which

Africa greatly needs, because it probably negates decolonisation (2013: 11). This necessitates praxis that focuses on true notions of decolonisation and development as pinpointed in Walter Rodney's second Chapter of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (2012) stating that Africa had some elements of development before the coming of the Europeans; denoting tampering of destiny which may have precipitated Fanon's notion of the 'Medina mentality' (1990: 30) suggesting stagnation in Africa. This also suggests a state of wretchedness (akin to trauma) pointed out by Fanon (1990: 30). McDonald, suggests that Africa would have achieved much if not distracted – seeing that, 'African Art actually constitutes a form of modernism that predates the Western variety by decades' (McDonald, 2013: 65); a notion which should stimulate the development of praxis through reflecting awareness and developmental ideals in the created plays. Jeffrey C. Alexander's (2013: 1) identification of trauma with 'suffering on a broad scale' brings useful insights. He relates colonialist trauma to 'exploitation and violence, war and genocide, the massacre of innocents…and racial strife' (2013: 1) (also highlighted in Chapter One). Alexander also links 'collective trauma' to 'individual experiences' (2013: 1), alluding to Freud's 'reminiscences' Alexander, (2013) perceives a situation where 'Intellectuals, artists, politicians, and social movement leaders create narratives about social suffering, which are projected 'as ideologies that create new ideal interests.' (2013: 2) This notion by Alexander is linked to the trajectory of praxis in this study as she says, 'trauma narratives can trigger significant repairs in the civil fabric' (2013: 2) which is associated with all sorts of possibilities in praxis; especially in the context of dramatising trauma and understanding issues within the centre and periphery.

Caruth (1996: 4), Alexander (2013), and Craps (2013: 14), associate the word 'wound' with loss and fracturing of cultural identity. This will also be linked to colonialist interference demonstrated in contexts involving Okonkwo in *TFA* and Elesin in *DKH*. The deep pain of colonisation is inferred from Soyinka's reaction

in *The Fourth Stage* (1976), where he metaphorically suggests that Africa was a world 'wrenched from its true course and smashed against alien boulders, leaving its inhabitants floundering in an ominous void' (Ifowodo, 2013: 19). Soyinka's statement is analogous to Achebe's (1958) reference to 'colonialism put a knife on the things that held the colonized together.' Within the same context, Ifowodo, points out that 'the neo-colonial knife is even sharper and cuts much deeper…the untreated wound of history, which haunts the present with such unabating and astonishing vengeance' (2013: xiv). This notion is associated with globalisation and imperialism**,** which praxis has taken cognizance of in this study (Nadal & Calvo, (ed), 2014) (Zajda, 2015: 442).

Fanon generally alludes to the melancholic state of the oppressed nations, suggesting colonialist dehumanisation (1990: 32-33). This is akin to the melancholic state of the Igbo and Yoruba nations explored in *TFA* and *DKH*. The horrible conditions of the nations mentioned is compared to 'the stink of the native quarter,' 'breeding of swarms' (1990: 33) which suggests the erosion of confidence and cultural identity. It is in the context of such notions that praxis in this study has confronted the need for healing and reconciliation through the created plays, by showing characters that are pointed to the centre of political, economic and social relevance. This focus of praxis is akin to Achebe's notion of 'a mental revolution which began to reconcile us to ourselves' (Achebe, 1975: 70) seen in the context of Ahluwalia's (2001: 69) notion of how colonialism altered the political and social world of the colonised. The focus of praxis in this study would be an opportunity to undo what colonialism has done. The trajectory of praxis reflects Foucault's notion of 'the role of the social scapegoat as victim' (1973) - considering that dealing with pre-colonialist trauma elements in Africa is equally as important as dealing with colonialist elements of trauma. This is analogous to the notion of the victim being in the same house as the oppressor (Madness and Civilization, 1973, in Lever's, 2012: 24).

An Anderson (2013: 44) point out that paternalism in some African societies is perceived as a potential trigger of trauma. Anderson, stated that females and some others were 'disorientated and marginalised' (Anderson, A.H. 2013: 44) (Sangmpam, S.N. 1995). (Also evident in Esan folktales; see, Inegbeboh, 2016). Thus, incidents of precolonial 'witchcraft accusations' are understood as being trauma related. This is because of the disorientation and marginalisation of the accused (Kiros, T. 2013: 157) (Norridge, Z, 2013: 1, 61, 99) (Woods, 2007: 8). Such knowledge apart from strengthening understanding of the African worldview also facilitates praxis in terms of the overall thematic representations in the created plays and how they should be understood. Such thematic representations are understood as not only 'dismantling colonialist power in all its forms' (Bill Ashcroft, etal. 2000: 63) but also directing praxis to engage with issues that gave weapons to associates of the colonialists in Africa towards fomenting and maintaining oppressions, precipitating trauma. Within that context, praxis in this study takes a cue from Saul Jack's suggestion of 'collective action, reflection and narration' (2014: 2) which is the playmaking focus of this study.

Fanon's idea of the clean slate or '*tabula rasa* which characterizes' decolonisation (Fanon, 1990: 27) is understood in the context of exploring trauma elements for the benefit of praxis in this study. This is related to Ngugi's notion of the decolonisation of the mind (Ngugi: 1988) and Fanon view that 'the proof of success lies in a whole social structure being changed from the bottom up' (Fanon, 1990: 27). This is perceived as an attempt to challenge and demystify the 'medina mentality' (Fanon, 1990: 30) through praxis. Looking at the trauma elements in the various texts explored, the image of trauma is replicated in the created plays in terms of the characters, settings and themes. Fanon's 'Medina mentality' is reflected in the created plays as well as in *TFA* and *DKH*. This is because they share similar themes and reflect an imagined nation characterised by corruption,

poverty, prostitution and underdevelopment (Varma, 2012: 95-96). Fanon's description of the two main areas shows disparity, with the imagery of trauma leaning heavily on the impoverished African Medina (1990: 30). Mengel & Borzaga, see this as capturing melancholia narratives (Mengel & Bozaga, 2012: 352-353) which is related to trauma notions in *TFA* and *DKH*. Fanon's notion of colonialist impoverishment and the medina mentality (in *The Wretched of the Earth,* 1990: 30) is akin to Ngugi's notion of language as a 'cultural bomb' (Ngugi, 1988: 3) which is able to 'annihilate a people's belief in their names, their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity' (Ngugi, 1988: 3). Ngugi refusing to identify with the colonialist language (at a certain period) reinstates the discourse on imperialist imposition' (Ngugi, 1988: 5). Achebe (1975) responds in this manner:

> Is it right that a man should abandon their mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intend to use it (Achebe,' 1975, cited in Ngugi, 1988: 7).

From another angle, Duggan's reference to Christina Wald (Patrick Duggan, 2012) is useful for understanding postcolonial trauma. She states that trauma is perceived as 'a frame through which to examine cultural issues' as well as 'of experience, memory, the body, and representation' (2012: 3) Nijenhuis' notion of trauma as a 'global situational context' as well as in the 'context of a single world' (Nijenhuis, E, 2015: 311) shows that trauma is universal; suggesting that experiences in other parts of the world are not different from the African situation. Charles R. Figley's comparison of trauma-based situations in western nations and South Africa also adds to the discourse on the universality of trauma (Figley, 2012: 18). Also, on the universality of trauma, Van Der Kolk believes that as 'human beings we belong to an extremely resilient species; stating that, 'since time immemorial we have rebounded from our relentless wars, countless disasters (both natural and man-made), and the violence of betrayal in our lives' (Kolk, 2014,

1). Kolk also mentioned that 'traumatic experiences' leave on lives, histories and cultures; 'with dark secrets being imperceptibly passed down through generations' (2014, 1). He points out that trauma leaves traces on 'our minds and emotions, on our capacity for joy and intimacy, and even on our biology and immune systems' (Kolk, 2014, 1).

Kolk's reflection on trauma is closely related to Shapiro and Forrest's reflection - seen as an 'event that has had a lasting negative effect' (Shapiro and Forrest, 2016, 1). The literature review focusses on the long - lasting effect of colonialism; addressing trauma notions and antecedents, being effects of colonialism on the individuals and collectives in Africa. Aime Cesaire gives a clear picture of effects of colonialism – facilitating understanding of accounts in texts that would be explored later in this Chapter as he says:

> I am talking of about societies drained of their essence, cultures trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic creations destroyed, extraordinary possibilities wiped out…I am talking about thousands of men sacrificed to the Congo-Ocean. I am talking about those who, as I write this, are digging the harbour of Abidjan by hand. I am talking about millions of men torn from their Gods, their land, their habits, their life – from life, from the dance, from wisdom (Cesaire, 1972, 2000: 43).

Cesaire (2000: 43) further reveals that Africa, as a continent suffered in various ways. He continued by saying that, Africa, 'experienced multiple levels of subjugations and denigrations that affected its identity formation and ways of knowing' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 58). Quoting Mbeki (2010) Ndlovu-Gatsheni, points out that such 'traumatic experiences date back to the Punic Wars of 264-146 BC which pitted African Carthage against European Rome' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 58). Ndlovu-Gatsheni added that, 'traumatic experiences like the slave trade, colonialism and apartheid influenced the way Africans imagined freedom and shaped the content of African intellectual interventions' (2013: 58) - a notion that would be seen in the context of the actions and reactions of Africans depicted in the created plays. The impression elicited is that Africa as a continent has

'suffered multiple levels of subjugations and denigrations' (2013: 58) understood as trauma. These experiences have affected African 'identity formations and ways of knowing' (2013: 58) – showing how postcolonial trauma is understood in the postcolonial texts explored.

2.9 Postcolonial Drama, Theatre and Literature in Africa

In trying to understand postcolonial drama, Theatre and literature in Africa, it will be important to refer to Kene Igweonu (2011: 12) who, in trying to locate African theatre within Africa said, 'What Africa Am I talking about?' This suggests that African theatre, drama and literature are eclectically bound, considering the cultures, languages, dialects and attitudes. The vastness of the continent suggests varied strands of dramatic expressions in the continent of Africa just as there are ethnic groups with their 'unique distinguishing qualities and characteristics' (Igweonu, 2011: 12). This further suggests that it would be difficult to pinpoint a unique African theatre. According to Igweonu, the concept of African theatre is viewed as a 'European construct' (2011: 12) showing that relevant examples abound within the continent of Africa.

Igweonu highlights the role of The African Theatre and Performance Working Group (AT&PWG) towards facilitating and sustaining 'scholarly discourse on African Theatre and drama' (Igweonu, 2011: 23). Igweonu further said that it is within the scope of this organisation that the efforts of some contemporary dramatists in Nigeria are brought to the light. For instance, integral to the interest of this study is the work of Gladys Ijeoma Akunna, whose dance movement analysis is reflected as a psycho-diagnostic tool in modern Nigerian medical practice (Igweonu, 2011: 29). She believes that 'dance can be used as an intervention to help mitigate stress and anxiety in mental health patients, but also as a diagnostic tool for investigating patients mental state and attitude' (Igweonu,

2011: 29). It is within such context that the future of praxis in this study is understood.

Ahmed Yerima's (a Nigerian contemporary playwright) play, *Hard Ground*, is focussed on the 'dramatisation of the Niger Delta Crisis in Nigeria' (Igweonu, 2011: 30). The focus has contemporary relevance in Nigeria considering the fact that the indigenes of the Niger Delta are said to be marginalised by the Nigerian government. This is because the people of that part of Nigeria have strongly opposed the presence of Oil companies whose exploration of crude oil has put their health and livelihood at risk. Yerima's play focusses on their decision to take up arms and fight back as well as negotiate. These are processes that are of interest to this research.

There is the purported call by Ngozi Udengwu, to 'African playwrights and theatre practitioners to reposition themselves in order to meet the challenges of the twentieth-first century' (Igweonu, and 2011: 30). This call is connected with the advancement of internet technology, the cinema, and the satellite television (Igweonu, 2011: 30). So, those media of expression are having an upper hand that stifles the traditional role of the theatre towards reaching the people in the nation of Nigeria. It is within this content that one is able to know that there are indigenous theatre groups in Nigeria that are 'accessible' and 'relevant; meaning that, such groups are able to tackle the 'challenges' in the nation (Igweonu, and 2011: 30). Within that scope, the creation of new plays in this study is relevant in the sense of augmenting or enhancing indigenous playmaking and play writing efforts in Africa.

Nigerian drama has the following challenge which is 'the continuing dominance of the older generations of playwrights' like Soyinka and Osofisan (Akoh, 2012: 264). The younger generation are responding positively despite various problems. Charles Nnoli, (2005), Nwanya and Ojemudia (2014: 50) Akoh, (2012:

264) posited that, 'African Literature of the 21st Century has suffered a setback on the account of quality in literary output that can stand the test of time' (2012: 264). This is within the context of the citing of the dearth of 'thematic focus' as the main modality of measuring literary quality. Although Akoh states that Nigerian drama reflects 'moralising, identity and character formation' (2012: 264) and further suggested that playwrights of the older generation are doing all they can to be socially relevant; giving examples with Soyinka's abandonment of the shrine of Ogun 'for the public proletarian space in his last two outings' with *The Beautification of Area Boy* and *King Baabu* (2012: 266) On the other hand, he posits that Osofisan has 'abandoned orthodox Marxism for a more subtle humanitarian approach' in his play, *Aringindin and the Nightwatchman*' (2012: 266).

It should be noted that all these transformations are hinged on the need for relevance on one hand and still tied to the western Epistemology on the other hand (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 59). This raises the question of how effective the Nigerian theatre is in tackling or engaging the issues that concern the majority of the ordinary people, within the scope of the epistemological notions that originate from the west (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 59). In that sense, trauma is addressed within the context of sustaining the four walls of theatre fashioned after colonialist thinking seen within the context of 'decentering and provincialising Europe and European thought' (Chakrabarty, 2000: 4, in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 59-60). The same source suggests that many African writers appropriate or subscribe to such Western epistemological thoughts; but various discourses on liberation such as Negritude, Conscientisation, African Socialism, African Humanism' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 57) are related to some of the key concepts in postcolonialism explored which are useful for explaining social issues within the continent of Africa.

The explorations of contemporary Nigerian literary and dramatic perspectives are useful for knowing the mode of trauma in Nigerian drama. According to Ce and Smith, 'both the old and new works of prose fiction adopt oratorical strategies of African literary education' (2014: 9-10) They added that, 'some of African positive traditions or critique changing behavioural traits that corrode traditional ethos and impinge on genuine development of society' (2014: 9-10). This form is understood to be disposed to the elitist paradigm, creating the impression that the collective is not being reached or served – a view which negates Ndlovu-Gatsheni's notion on African epistemological freedom (2013: 59). Akoh (2012: 266) points out that there are other contemporary voices whose plays need to be seen - suggesting a gap in this research. This suggests that the older generations dominated such voices, even with their stance of metamorphoses mentioned earlier, with dramatic criticism focussed on the work of the 'masters' (2012: 268). What this suggests is that plays by contemporary playwrights like Olu Obafemi, Efiong Johnson, Julie Okoh, Stella Oyedepo, Irene Salami, would not see the light of the day considering that they are not subjects of literary criticism (2012: 268). Within that context of dominance, the narratives of some of the contemporary writers are being eclipsed. It is the intension of praxis to focus on creating plays that echo 'African epistemological freedom' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 59).

2.10 Reflecting on the 'sites of witness' in some African plays

The purpose of this section is to give a brief overview of how the playwriting and playmaking tradition or form in Africa is viewed when compared with plays created in this research. Duggan's claim is being used as a backdrop – as he says that the performance text (in the context of trauma) is perceived as the 'sites of witness' (2012: 85). How would this be perceived in the context of the created plays and the style or form adopted by some African playwrights and playmakers explored in this section? The purpose for this exploration is to examine if the postcolonial plays explored engage trauma like the plays created, that directly engage trauma.

This would be useful for determining which of the plays are better designated as trauma-based or seen as the 'sites of witness' (2012: 85). From Duggans' perspective, the 'sites of witness' are understood as an attempt to 'reconstitute or historicize trauma-events and symptoms' (2012: 85).

Gilbert and Tompkins have inadvertently touched on the sites of witness as they reflected on the 'markers of Post-Colonial Drama' (See page 14 0f this Thesis) (1996: 11). Such markers are described as 'acts that respond to the experience of imperialism, whether directly or indirectly' or 'acts that interrogate the hegemony that underlines imperial representation' (1996: 11). These appear to put the plays created in this study within the same frame as other postcolonial plays in Africa. Moreover, the created plays reflected more of postcolonial trauma, being outcomes of colonialism and imperialism. It is a reconstruction of traumatic conditions or elements, (as seen in the created plays) that qualify the created plays as sites of witness, as stated earlier.

The following areas would be useful for explaining the focus of this research against the backdrop of exploring the difference between existing postcolonial plays and the plays created. It will be important to mention that all plays in Africa are classed as postcolonial because they are mostly written after the colonialist era. Some earlier plays written by Wole Soyinka, Clark Bekeredemo, Ola Rotimi, Zulu Sofola, Wale Ogunyemi, Sonni Oti, and Obi Egbuna are described as 'animist metaphysics' because they engaged with 'aesthetics of cultural retrieval' with contents that touch on 'ancient myths and rituals' (Chambers, 2002, 550). From such description, those plays are not perceived as 'sites of witness' because they do not essentially explore postcolonial trauma, neither do they relate testimonies of trauma.

Other playwrights like, Ama Ata Aidoo and Efua Sutherland (two female Ghanaian dramatists) emphasise the storytelling tradition, described as, texts that use

contemporary form to preserve pre-contact traditions. Plays by Aidoo and Sutherland, which are mostly related to traditional contexts (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996: 131) seems to be the style of most playwrights or playmakers from other parts of Africa – also touching on 'ancient myths and rituals' as mentioned by Chambers earlier, (2002, 550). In all these exploration, Wole Soyinka's *DKH* emerges clearly as a play that fits into the notion of 'sites of witness.' Osofisan's *Once upon Four Robbers* (1998) does not have the colonialist background like *DKH* (1991) and would not be described as a 'site of witness' like Soyinka's DKH although both plays fall within the postcolonial era. *Once upon Four Robbers* (1998) is contemporary and post-independence while Soyinka's *DKH* depicts events in pre-independence Nigeria. Both Soyinka's *DKH* and Osofisan's *Once upon Four Robbers* (1998) are set in the western part of Nigeria; drawing on the rich cultures and traditions of the Yoruba nation.

Notions in *Once Upon Four Robbers* (1998) are related to Thompson and Udogu's reflections on the colonialist policy of aggregating ethnic groups who are not religiously or culturally connected or prepared for Independence. Such ethnic issues like the Nigeria-Biafra civil war, (Huang, R. 2016: 89-126) the Boko Haram Terrorist Insurgency (Comolli, 2015: 45) have brought pains to the nation of Nigeria in the context of events in *Once upon Four Robbers* (1998) The cases chronicled in the 'Narratives of displacements' (Jacob, J.U.U., Abia-Bassey, M., Nkanga, E. and Aliyu, A (2016: 176-190) also reveal the extent of trauma in the Nigerian society like the accounts given by the market women in the text, *Once upon Four Robbers* (1991: 4) reflecting traumatic elements of a nation left stranded by the colonialists, seen in the context of the irony of a market place being used as an execution ground instead of being used for trading solely (1991: 4).

Some discourses consider governmental ineptitude reflected in the Nation of Nigeria suggesting that the texts explored and the plays created reflect a failed state (Falola and Genova, 2009: 170). The reflection of conflict in both created plays in this research shows a nation that has been negatively tampered with by colonialism. What is suggested is that there is national fragility as revealed in the interplay of cultural dialectics in the texts. Banham (2004: 155) suggests that such texts are not accessible to the educated class because of unfamiliar cultural nuances in the plays.

In exploring Osofisan's play, *Once upon Four Robbers* (1991) it would be seen that the play opens with the scourge of robbers on the nation. The activities of the market women reveal that there is the fear of the robbers by the populace and the eventual harassment of the market women would be seen as a typical oppressive stance of factions or power mongers within the Nigerian nation. In a similar situation, the soldiers who are in government are willing to correct and punish the robbers but lack the will to correct their own corruption as leaders. Femi Osofisan also paints the picture of pathos or despair; in the context of bleakness – not related to notions in the created plays. Through Major, Osofisan says, 'You can't understand? This is the end. The beginning. I am leaving the filth. I am leaving you' (2001: 84), stated in short sentences reflect the traumatic state of the nation seen in the context of the colonialist regime. Secondly, Osofisan speaks through Angola, reflecting the moribund situation of the robbers – showing that the folks in the nation are not obviously comfortable; although they are singing and dancing. Angola reflects it all as he says:

> Listen to him! It's disgusting! What are you if not a corpse! Tell me. You were born in the slum and you didn't know you were a corpse? Since you burst out from the womb, all covered in slime, you've always been a corpse. You fed on worms and left-overs, your body nude like a carcass in the government mortuary, elbowing your way among other corpses. And the stink is all over you like a flooded cemetery in Lagos (Osofisan, in Gilbert, H. *Postcolonialism*, 2001: 75).

What is pertinent about Angola's speech above is that there is the element of low self-esteem, although this is a metaphorical representation of the situation of the nation. The brutality of the robbers who steal, trick, maim and kill, represent the inability of the government to lead or protect the people in the nation (*Once upon Four Robbers,* 1991: 55). The robbers do not seem to have respect for others in the nation, prompting one to suggest that the notion of the vote at the end of the text was more of a farce than reality. This suggests that they deserve the just punishment by firing squad, considering the trauma they have inflicted on others. It is understood that, by giving the robbers a voice, there would be copy cats, thereby necessitating the state of trauma.

It is important to relate events in *Once upon Four Robbers* to what Osofisan reflected in the text, *Postcolonialism* (Gilbert, 2001: 11-35) in which he referred to the 'inert silence' that 'aristocrats seek to impose upon their subjects.' From his statement, one is able to understand or perceive that aristocrats within the context of the nation of Nigeria are capable of doing things to their subjects, which results in trauma. For example, there is the 'violation of freedom of expression' pointed out by Linus N. Malu (2015: 280-282) through the promulgation of punitive laws which restrained playwrights, journalists and other literary writers from writing freely, and challenging corrupt governments and neo-colonialist powers (2015: 280-282). Events in Achebe's *TFA* enunciate some of the negative activities of the colonialists which gave birth to resistance in Nigerian playwrights whose plays challenge the excesses of the government (military or civilian) in one way or the other. Here, the term 'aristocrats' (Gilbert, 2001: 11-35) refer to those who are not in the same rung as those in the periphery in this research. The 'aristocrats' in the centre are perceived as pseudo-colonialists in Africa who have stepped into the shoes of the colonialists. Osofisan sees the role of the 'dissenting artist,' as an unorthodox role reflects the non-conformist playwright, he describes as having the capacity to 'triumph through the gift of

metaphor and magic, parody and parable, masking and mimicry' (1998: 11-35). These roles encapsulate the focus I had as a playwright in this research.

2.11 Trauma notions from other perspectives

Neeves' notion of bringing 'Trauma Studies and Postcolonial Studies into closer conjunction' (2009) is akin to the exploration of postcolonial trauma in this study. Whereas this study has a dramatic component, Neeves' research is mainly literary. Neeves' study suggests that like studying the traumatic effect of the Holocaust, there is the need to explore other equally relevant subjects like, AIDS, sexual trauma, rape and incest; stating that, they 'are worthy of serious focus' (2009). Neeves ties those mentioned notions to 'the legacy of historical oppression, cultural imperialism, economic and political deprivation' linking them to issues that mirror 'international relations and global society.' In doing this, Neeve brings relevance to this study in which postcolonial trauma is explored through creating plays.

Dodgson-Katiyo's notion of 'Gender, history and trauma in Zimbabwe and other African Texts' (2015) brings some light to this study. His research examined how themes are linked, paying close attention to, 'Zimbabwean literary and other cultural texts within the broader context of the construction of identities and the politics of inclusion and exclusion in nationalist and oppositional discourses' (2015). The study also reveals how 'writing on war, trauma and healing informs and develops readers' understanding of the relationship of the past to the present' – a notion that is closely associated with the focus of this research, based on the exploration of postcolonial trauma, as seen from the lens of the past and the present.

Gill's research explores an intergenerational autobiography focused on the 'historical narrative and trauma' (2013) The point of relationship to this research is the exploration of published works by three contemporary women writers -

Sindiwe Magona, Sally Morgan and Janet Campbell Hale, whose texts engage 'the legacy of colonialism in a different settler society' (2013). Gills study is related to this research in the sense that, the 'authors interweave personal narratives with the life stories of mothers and grandmothers' – seen in the context of 'traumatic colonial pasts' (2013).

2.12 Chapter Summary

In this Chapter, various textual sources have been explored which give insights about postcolonial trauma in Africa. The nations perceived in this Chapter are subsequently associated with the imagined nation in which generically reflects the site for traumatic happenings in the whole of Africa. In the process of doing this, texts from various sources were engaged to identify notions of trauma related to individuals and collectives. The highlighted accounts explored in this Chapter are related to the research questions which are useful for knowing about postcolonial trauma. It will be noted that whereas the exploration of some key concepts in postcolonialism in the first Chapter of this research set a foundation for the literature review, the literature review corroborates the knowledge about concepts explored in the introductory Chapter. The explorations of the literary and socio-political sources are useful for interpreting notions of colonialist induced trauma; knowing that without the exploration of the sources, the interpretation would not be possible. In this review, literary sources are used for laying the foundation for understanding postcolonial trauma and for understanding the trauma plays within the genre of postcolonialism. Finally, the knowledge advanced from the texts explored identifies gaps for playmaking (praxis) and for generating new knowledge through this research. The exploration of other perspectives in this Chapter shows that there are other studies that are associated with postcolonial trauma, albeit from the literary perspective.

Praxis Window 3

Excerpts from praxis and indicative of stimulus

Play 1	**The Chief:** I have invited you to this meeting to discuss the fate that has suddenly befallen us. It is so sad that I have heard complaints from different quarters and thought it would be wise to confirm these insinuations in public. It's no longer news that the longest snake has caused more pain to us than bringing the prosperity we hoped for. Our pains keep increasing on a daily basis. I will like to hear from each one of you and hopefully we will all consider how to face the situation as one. **First Man:** Greetings to the Chief and the people. I personally think that we would have heeded the voice of the **Eye of the future**. For many years, we have learnt how to survive with what we have and the eye of the future is entity that our forefathers gave to us. We should have followed his words by not allowing the Longest Snake into our community.	**Progression of Praxis** At this point, I am writing this play and reflecting on the dislocation of communities by the coming of the Train. I am also reflecting on the wounds caused to individuals and collectives. I am also reflecting on the powerlessness of individuals and collectives.
Play 2	**Unknown Voice:** If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing? **1st Man:** We were determined to travel and reach our destination – any European city. We believed that if we get there, life would change for us and we would survive. We were also dreaming of the sort of images that adorned postcards sent by friends who had made it to Europe. We dreamt of beautiful cites, neon lights, fast cars and money littering everywhere. There, women buy handbags with millions of pounds or Euros. These are nations where the lights never go out at night. We have always had this notion from postcards, magazines and movies that they live in colours and we lived in black and white.	I am writing this play and at the same time reflecting on the concepts and theories in Chapter One – especially on the notion of Dependency. I am also inferring trauma from the following quote: 'If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?' Note the First Man's idea of Europe as a place where wealth is stored for them to explore. Could this be greed or notions of dependency? See: Page, 77, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013). Relate to African anecdotal proverbs and wise sayings associated with the old and elderly in Africa. Call on the wise ones to speak to our young ones who are perishing in the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Ocean on their way to find wealth in foreign nations.

Chapter Three

The Practice-led Research Methodology and this Research

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter introduces the practice-led methodology and also explains what constitutes this form of research. This Chapter also identifies the role of praxis for understanding postcolonial trauma. It can be argued that the practice-led methodology is associated with creating (trauma-based plays in this instance) as a viable way for systematically understanding postcolonial trauma in Africa. This presents a better view through the lens of praxis and exegetical exploration; although a back-flow effect is possible where praxis is informed by the exegesis, vice-versa (Smith and Dean, 2009: 97-98). What is equally relevant are the various elements of trauma identified in the created plays, and how such notions in the created plays advance knowledge about postcolonial trauma. The 'back-flow' effect is understood through Gray and Malins' *Visualizing Research: A Guide to the Research Process in Art and Design* (2016: 1-2) – drawing on the experiential learning perspective - in which they state that, 'We learn most effectively by doing – by active experience, and reflection on that experience' being the pathway of this research, which includes, learning 'through practice, through research, and through reflection on both.' The essential essence of this method of research may also be perceived in the sense that, this 'active and reflective learning makes a dynamic relationship between practice and research' because, practice 'raises questions that can be investigated through research, which in turn impacts on practice' a foundation which may be described as a framework that, 'provides an explicit structure and criteria for learning', being how my experience with this research method may be described as articulated by Gray and Malins (2016). Moreover, I will also like to see the experiential perspective as being associated with 'the theory of constructive learning or constructivism' (Gray and Marlins' 2016:

2) perceived in the following key principles, as well as through the lens of this research:

a. That learning is built as a response to an individual's experiences and prior knowledge – as reflected in the created plays.
b. That learning occurs through active exploration – as reflected in the exegesis.
c. That learning occurs within a social context as reflected in the created plays and the exegesis.

3.2 The importance of the Practice-led Methodology

Gaylene Perry's article (*History Documents, Arts Reveals: Creative Writing as Research*, in Barrett and Bolt, 2014: 35-45) states that 'creative work should be recognised as valid research.' This notion is equally related to Dianne Donnelly's notion that the amalgamation of the creative and the critical constitutes 'an original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding' (2011: 120). He adds that 'creative work' is considered as research because of the 'specialised research insights' gained as well as the notion of conceptualisations and reflections that are part of the creative writing experience (2011: 120-121). It is within that context that the praxis of this study finds a useful foundation, coupled with the confidence drawn from Perry, as she says, 'As I wrote, I learned my own lessons' (2014: 39) reflecting the same experience gained in this research and demonstrating the inter-relationship between the creative and the critical as basis for knowing (Kroll and Harper, 2012: 29). This practice-led research also identifies with Barrett and Bolt's (2010: 148) reflections on the OECD definition of research in the Frascati Manual (2002: 30) as follows: 'Creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of the stock of knowledge to devise new applications' meaning that, the exegesis and praxis confirm the assertion.

From the OECD definition, it would be perceived that the validity of this research is hinged on the creative component, and the exegetical component that is systematic and indicative of the effort to explore the knowledge of 'man, culture and society' (OECD 2002: 30) – as well as the articulation of that 'stock of knowledge' to creating new plays. Ewald Mengel helps to strengthen the stage for the practice-led framework of this study as he states that, history is capable of being turned into 'her story' (Mengel and Borzaga, 2012, 357). This suggests that historical experiences or narratives and memories, (for instance) are capable of being used for creative expressions. Praxis in this study is linked with Mengel's notion of the 'narrator as midwife,' reiterating and reflecting the role of the playwright or playmaker (in this instance) who occupies the position of the narrator. It is the playwright or playmaker that imaginatively births new plays that are useful for understanding and knowing about postcolonial trauma. It is within such context that the inter-relationship between the creative and the critical perspectives of this study is understood (Kroll and Harper, 2012: 29). It would also be seen that in the process of writing, meanings changed as she said, 'I found a sense of something like healing in the story, in the process of writing…through writing I felt change occurring' (Barrett and Bolt, 2010: 39) which is indicative of the anticipated change reflected in my praxis; showing how new voices emerge in the created plays, and how the trauma related throes that accompany such voices are useful for understanding postcolonial trauma. This may suggest what might be happening in my mind or the processing of thoughts that occur in praxis at that moment.

3.3 Knowing by reflecting on the dramatic perspective

This practice-led research also identifies with Peter Brook's reflections in *The Empty Space* (1969) which I have associated with the imagined circle. In Peter Brook's bare stage (Brook, 1969: 9) it is possible to envisage the dramatic activities attracted to the bare stage, like the ideas attracted or brought into the

imagined circle; which presupposes that it takes an empty circle to engage in playmaking. It is important to mention that the idea of the circle is different from Danby and Kemp's 'Drama Circles' which is a combination of several circles (1982, 98-99). The difference is reflected in the meanings associated with Kemp's Circles which are not overtly dramatic as seen in the playmaking process in this study.

The playmaking process and the notion of the imagined circle reiterate Stern's idea that 'no single, clear, unambiguous, universal definition of theatre has emerged' (2014: 1-16). So, the playmaking process reflects a free-flowing dramatic structure, reminiscent of African folktales, where the narrator holds sway. In the created plays, there is a narrative and there are various characters assembled to narrate trauma from a postcolonial perspective. In the playmaking context of this research, the question, 'What is Theatre' is explained in the new structures that engage the subject of trauma. Stern corroborates this view by stating that the 'final way to answer the question is just to explore theatre's variety as we have done, to remind ourselves of its flexibility and resistance to strict or final limitations' (2014: 1-16). Stern's answer to the question above supports the flexibility in the narrative approach of the created plays. The notion of flexibility is associated with the epistemological essence of Africa, reiterated by Nabudere (2011: 71) who reflected on the need to advance the issues in Africa through associating with what is intrinsically and extrinsically Afrocentric (Ansell, 2013: 6). Also relevant is the association of the Circle with praxis to engage trauma notions in playmaking. This is akin to Bowkett's reflection on the 'personality profile' (2009: 129) as well as Nicholas Chare's 'bodily experience of the Rollright stone circles in Oxfordshire' which is said to 'explore modes of descriptive interpretation' associated with the late Neolithic man's affinity with the circles (Grant and Rubin, 2012: 12). The notion of the circle (although explored further in this Chapter) is understood in the context of the 'core-periphery' concept from which postcolonial trauma is also understood. Huggan (2013: 12) for

example points to 'intervention' and its primary goal as, 'to raise general consciousness of injustice rather than to provide a specific rationale for struggle, armed or otherwise' (2013: 12) showing that the created plays in this study have interventive potentials that are useful for engaging those areas identified by Huggan.

3.4 Knowing about postcolonial trauma through reading and reflecting

In this research, the practice-led methodology benefits from reading and reflecting on literary and socio-political texts. This is useful for knowing and understanding relevant trauma elements, and for creating trauma plays. This means that reading is accompanied by reflections on notions in various texts and sources. This supports the idea that 'Creative research is predicated on the interrogation of a series of questions through praxis' (Allpress, Barnacle, Duxbury, and Grierson, 2012: 59). Within the context of reading and reflecting on various texts, it has been possible to understand notions that are integral to Colonialism and postcolonial trauma. This shows that in the process of the research, praxis is being affected or interpreted by the trauma elements encountered in the various sources. This means that the explorative exercise has a stimulative and interpretative effect that is useful for engaging praxis and understanding postcolonial trauma.

Equally important to praxis are the historical, political and socio-political sources explored as part of gaining knowledge for praxis. Such antecedents or incidents are related to trauma memories which are useful for understanding trauma experiences which Diala, refers to as: 'historically related situations of oppression and resistance' (2014: 65). It would be noted that what is important in the collected postcolonial sources are the notions of 'oppressions' (Gilbert, 2001: 1). Such notions of oppressions or experiences of postcolonial trauma are directly or indirectly related to colonialist activities in the imagined nation of Africa; and are also useful for creating and exploring plays in this study. The overall purpose of

this study is a deliberate attempt to examine or identify past issues associated with colonialist activities - which contain elements of trauma, useful for praxis and understanding postcolonial trauma. Within that context, Jones (2003: 37) states that, memory 'discovers identity by producing the relation of resemblance among our perceptions' (2003: 37) which explains how the inter-relationship of exegesis and praxis is clearly understood.

3.5 Knowing about postcolonial trauma through the African past

This research also identifies with the oral tradition in Africa as highlighted by Finnegan (2012: 39). From what she said, it is inferred that Africa has always been rich in both communal artistic traditions which are also useful for explaining notions of trauma when explored. First, there is the importance of drawing from the 'communal consciousness,' touching on the dynamics of gaining from the group synergy. It is anticipated that what is handed down verbally are notions that are akin to 'originality' seen in African folklore, though her description of African art as being 'primitive' would be strongly argued against. However, I will agree with the idea that African oral literature, according to Finnegan, of which Esan folktales are part of, are 'radically different' because they emphasise originality and innovation' (Finnegan 2012: 39) which can only be recognised by perceptive minds, based on my interactions with such folktales.

From Finnegan's point of view, it would be inferred that African communities in the past had the ability to narrate and affect their communities through their narrative acts. This is distinguished from Mengel and Borzaga's notion of the 'crisis narrative or story' (based on their South African experience), which 'offers certain emotional inducements and epistemological rewards' (Mengel and Borzaga, 2012: 36). The impression given here is that the 'crisis narrative' is related to the present, which is associated with the dramatisation of postcolonial trauma, which they see in the context of current challenges like HIV/AIDS. The 'crisis story' shows that if Africans

were capable of narrating folktales and reflecting on proverbs, songs and wise sayings; they are also capable of relating to trauma memories or trauma experiences. The ability to ascertain knowledge has always been a part of the African societies and is important to explore the use of such knowledge – especially within the context of the narrative form, as used in the created plays. The ability to document memory traditionally is understood in the orality of the African mind associated with the literary expressive medium. It is though such reflections that the presence of trauma in the continent has been validated or authenticated through Finnegan's postulation (2012: 337) and the relevance of the narrative streak in Achebe's *TFA* despite his endorsement of the 'Eurocentric Epistemology' (See: Ngugi's *Decolonising the Mind*, 1988: 7; Achebe, *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, 1975). This goes a long way in revealing the narrative essence in Achebe's *TFA* within the context of African narrative tradition. Equally relevant is the epistemological relevance of *TFA* and the created plays as a base for explaining postcolonial trauma to future generations as reflected in 3.9.

3.6 The imagined Circle as means of knowing about postcolonial trauma

As previously explored, the circle has been used in various modes - dramatic and non-dramatic (Danby and Kemp, 1982, 98-99). In exploring the imagined circle, in the context of the practice-led methodology, the circle is important because it suggests the importance of bringing notions to the centre; assumed to be the place of power or strength. This further means that creating plays with ideas that are initiated from the centre will go a long way to highlight the needs and aspirations of the people. For example, as basic as a mundane practice as 'point and kill,' (Awachie, 2015: 10) the dramatic potentials should not be ignored. In that context, if people would ordinarily point at live fish, asking that they be killed and prepared for them to eat (in some restaurants in Lagos, Nigeria), that same concept is highlighted and used in dramatising postcolonial trauma. The ability to point and kill is indicative of the ability for Africans to point to trauma issues which

could be dramatised for development and empowerment. It is such freedom of choice that has been related to the exploration of trauma elements in postcolonial texts, and the dramatisation of such elements of trauma. This notion related to 'point and kill' and the exploration of trauma for praxis suggests that Africans should further be encouraged to move towards the 'centre' rather than being in the 'periphery' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2000: 36; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 1995: 104). What is being communicated here, is that communities in Africa should move towards the centre and engage more with the sort of drama (as highlighted in this research) that is capable of drawing from 'colonial memory' (Gottsche, 2013: 69). In that context, trauma elements represent catalysts for arousing or explaining African 'critical consciousness' social action and change (Hagher, 2014, 16; Amkpa, 2004: 42).

The notion of 'point and kill' and the dramatisation of trauma are indicative of the relevance of words in any society, especially in the African society. This highlights how words are fused together for gaining meaning, either exegetically or in praxis. The fusion of words and ideas reflect how trauma notions or elements, (as inferred from explored texts) have become useful for engaging change and progress in Africa. This is akin to Leavy's notion of 'dramatic construction', which is related to capturing 'human experience' (Leavy, 2015: 173) related to conceptualisation in this study. In exploring 'creative practice' (Donnelly and Harper, 2013: xv) words and ideas are reflected as the basis for enquiry and the creation of new plays. In support of this notion, Taura and Nagai (2011: 189) quote Cowdroy and Graaff (2005) who pointed out that 'conceptualisation is the very essence of creativity' and also a tool for 'coming to know' - perceived as a catalyst for knowing. Leavy's notions of: 'consciousness raising, empowerment, emancipation, political agendas, discovery, exploration, and education' (Leavy, 2015: 173) are related to the creative process enunciated as having the potential to impact African societies towards self-empowerment. This notion provides an

answer to Ngugi, who once asked, 'But what would be the centre? And what would be the periphery, so to speak? How would the centre relate to the periphery?' (WaThiongo, N. 1994: 90). The centre is the place of dramatisation of trauma, linked to the development and self-empowerment of the people of Africa. In relation to knowing how the centre is related to the periphery, the following points are relevant:

a. The centre is understood as a place where proponents of Afrocentrism should dramatically explain their points of view; contrary to Eurocentric points of views held against them (Ansel, 2013: 68).

b. The centre could suggest that Africans have stayed enough in the periphery; so they should develop a strong resolve to completely occupy the centre for restoration, development and change (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 43).

c. The centre is perceived from a pedagogical perspective where children reflect on various concepts, including appropriation, from the point of view of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2013: 19-20).

d. The centre is reflected as a place where Compradors are encouraged to confess their sins to the nation as described by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2013: 61-62).

e. The centre should also be seen as a place for reflection and repentance from deeds done to the folks in the nation. This suggests the need for reconciliation and regeneration.

3.7 Reflecting on how trauma is perceived in the imagined nation

This practice-led research also identifies with the idea of the traumatised nation from the point of view of Mark Wolynn's text, *It Didn't Start with You* (2016). Although it a perspective of trauma from the family point of view, it is useful for understanding the notion of trauma in the imagined nation. It is described as an explicit representation of how trauma is located, explored and dealt with within the family or nation. In exploring the source of trauma, it is important to use the examples in the text as a means of authenticating the veracity of trauma within

the nation. In typical scenarios enunciated by Wolynn, reference is made of folks who had talk therapy, medication, and other failed interventions. The picture projected is farfetched from ways and means that individuals in the imagined nation would solve their problems, considering the PTSD perspective.

What is pertinent is Wolynn mentioning that, 'The latest scientific research, now making headlines, also tells us that the effects of trauma can pass from one generation to the next' (Wolynn, 2016: 1) which authenticates the notion that past postcolonial experiences in Africa have a lot to do with notions of trauma in the imagined nation and the plays created in this research. There is the idea that pain can be transferred from one era to another generation. So, judging from the reactions of the characters in the created plays, I would agree with Wolynn that, 'Pain does not always dissolve on its own or diminish with time. Even if the person who suffered the original trauma has died.' This may be seen in the context in which notions of trauma in *TFA* and *DKH* are still useful for understanding postcolonial trauma in the created plays in this research. Wolynn, added that, 'even if his or her story lies submerged in years of silence, fragments of life experience, memory, and body sensation can live on, as if reaching out from the part to find resolution in the minds and bodies of those living in the present' (Wolynn, 2016: 1), a notion that is being played out in the created plays in this research as characters are seen enacting fragments of the traumatic past that are strangely related to the present. It should be noted that the meaning drawn from Wolynn is that, if trauma can be located within a family structure for example, it could also be located within the national structure. The lessons gained on how trauma shapes who we are, according to the text, is understood in the context of how trauma 'changed' the characters in the created plays. As trauma is perceived in the family, so is trauma perceived in the nation and the effects and outcomes of trauma in Wolynn's example is evident in the imagined nation.

3.8 Exploring the folktale medium in this Research

Folktales, including Esan folktales display unique characteristics in plots, settings characterisation and meanings that anecdotally stride between two worlds; the land of the living (Agbon in Esan) and the dead (Elimi, in Esan), which I perceive as a juxtaposition of the natural and supernatural. As seen in Abayole, (Appendix 3) the world is represented by humans and spirits; although in other Esan folktales the animal and plant elements are included. The ancestors (Enekalo) are said to live in the same domain as the spirits and the creator of the universe, Osenobulua. The circle (Eise) may be seen in many folk activities including those associated with folktale events - dancing, chanting and singing. Such interaction may be construed as mimetic (imitative) or dramatic. In my part of Africa, the 'call and response' pattern is common and meaningfully reflected in folktale events. In my part of Africa, and all over Africa, storytelling is our Radio, Television and stage, all put together. In my personal experience of folktale events in Esan, the performance of folktales was regular in school and at home. My father, mother and other older relations were the storytellers in the family. While father and mother narrated folktales, we all listened. My other relatives would add embellishments, reminding them of other aspects that may have been unknowingly forgotten. Where my father or mother did not remember a particular song associated with a particular story, other relations like visiting uncles or aunties reminded them about such details as they continued telling the story to our excitement.

Also imperative to the folktale medium is the projection of images like greed, love, fear, hatred, jealousy, which reveal dramatic potentials. The Esan folktales which I have personally collected and translated into English, including *ABAYOLE* (see Appendix 3) fall into the Okha Uki-Vbala (moonlight tales) genre; whereas there is also the Okha Umalemolen (folktales by Umalemolen narrators). From my experience, the former is enacted daily while the latter is performed in ceremonial

occasions with music and dance by accomplished performers. I have also personally observed that the folktales in Esan, (including *ABAYOLE*, in Appendix 3) from which the plays created in this research are patterned reveal dramatic images with characterisation, unusual settings, including simplistic and didactic messages.

I have been inspired in patterning *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*, (see Appendix 1 and 2) created in the course of this research to the Esan folktale medium. This is because of my observation (as a participant observer) of the impact and essence of the folktale content and performance. Moreover, I also observed that the folktales convey meanings which are similar to the interventive focus associated with this research. Such meanings are associated with the moral lessons or the didactic essence reflected in the plays I created for the purpose of understanding postcolonial trauma in this research. It also important to mention that *ABAYOLE*, (Appendix 3) mirrors the plays I created in the sense of narrative style, the structure of the plays, touching on the beginning middle and end; as well as the content of the tale based on human angle issues. Also, the mirroring framework of the folktale is useful for strengthening the experiences I am bringing into this research. I remember sitting by various storytellers in Esan and also teaching myself to write folktales in later years. What I vividly remember are the didactic elements that are associated with doing the right things always which is emphasised in the created plays in this research – *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk.* In writing the plays, I can clearly recollect words like OYA suffering or pain, IDOBOLO, (evil) and other motifs which reverberate in the created plays within the context of postcolonial trauma, being reflections of pain and suffering. In conceptualising notions in praxis, the plays may be seen as an opportunity to relate UHI (advice) to the group of folks who are likely thinking of travelling through the Sahara Desert to Europe as seen in the play, *The Endless Walk*. The suffering which the characters went through may be associated with OYA

(suffering or pain), situation(s) that they may have encountered as seen in the play. Also, postcolonial trauma may be understood in the context of IDOBOLO (evil); a situation which the characters could not alter. In *ABAYOLE*, (Appendix 3) the main character, the boy (like the characters in the created plays) also travels from home in search of the Otien fruit. Although his situation may be associated with greed, the notion of moving from one place to another is also evident in the plays I created. Therefore, in juxtaposing the created plays with Esan folktales, it would be imagined that the created plays may be perceived as a way of enhancing the storytelling medium in my part of Africa. Moreover, the interventive stance is also relevant, seeing that socio-political themes introduced in the created plays is an added advantage; although they are absent in the folktales, showing the uniqueness of the folktale medium.

Such uniqueness is ascertained by Bridget Inegbeboh, (2016: 8) who echoes the usefulness of Esan Folktales as literature, a notion reiterated by Finnegan (2012: 39) that African folktales may be seen in the class of literature. It is this unique essence that has been transferred in praxis in this research touching on the notion that the new plays are able to reach the same folks that folktales reached in my part of Africa for the purpose of entertainment, information and learning about EMUATA (truth) and EWALEN (common sense) which the folktales project.

In the light of the encoded traditional meanings (in motifs) which are not however explored in this research, the meanings in the folktales may be associated with the notion of the imagined nation reflected in this research. So, as folktales focus on the needs of Esan society, the created plays also reflect on the pain of the collectives (in the imagined nation) who are similar to characters in the folktales. This highlights the continued relevance of traditional folktales in channelling a new dramatic frame with new settings, contexts, themes, motifs, and other similar images. In creating these plays from the folktale framework, it is necessary to

state that I am aware of previous efforts to convert traditional folktales in my part of Africa into drama reflected in the next two paragraphs.

In exploration the relevance of folktales in this research, my search did not identify any playwright in my part of Africa who has deliberately focussed on postcolonial trauma as I have done in this research. I have also adopted elements in Esan folktales based on my observation in Esan, where an individual narrator tells the story (as in *ABAYOLE*, see Appendix 3) while others may interject slightly to add embellishments, clarifications or anecdotes like, riddles and proverbs. It is also importance to note the difference between the folktale (presumably as folk literature) and the folktale performance. I also observed that the folktale performance traditions differ from one narrator to another based on their improvisatory style, reflecting an interventive focus (through the use of moral anecdotes) which is similar to my experiment with the Alternative plays in this research.

I have adopted the narrative style because of the need to adopt the Folktale paradigm in one hand, and on another hand, I am particularly interested in the interventive elements in African folktales, touching on the didactic perspective where moral lessons are encouraged. However, in my playwriting style, I have bent towards the call to be Afrocentric (Ukala, *Folkism*, 1996) described as a call 'Towards a national Aesthetic Principle for Nigerian Dramaturgy.' (Ukala, 1996: 279). Apart from being a call for Nigerian playwrights to feature more of the folktale tradition, the suggestion does not attach any form of prescription; therefore, playwrights like me have adopted their individual styles or chosen areas to adopt from folktales. Sam Ukala (1996: 286) reflected his style of Folkism, through the inclusion of folktale elements in his plays, like, Akpakaland, (1990), The Placenta of Death (1997) and other plays. Ukala (1996: 285) opines that some Nigerian playwrights like Clark, Soyinka, Rotimi, Osofisan and others adopt

the 'folkist tendency, but hardly go the whole hog' arguing that 'folkism enables the audience to 'stand outside' or inside, depending on how it is affected, at any point in time, by the aesthetic and ideological content of the performance (1996: 286),' a view which echoes my playwriting framework based on the centre-periphery concept.

Okpewho (1993: 222) reiterates Ukala's perception of the African folktale performance structure, which has unconsciously affected my creative consciousness in the writing of the plays in this research. They are, the laws of aesthetic response, the Law of opening; also seen as 'the opening formula or opening frame, the Law of joint performance, the Law of creativity, free enactment and responsibility, the law of judgement, the Law of protest against suspense, the Law of the expression of the emotions, the Law of ego projection, and the Law of closing. Whereas I have not used all the laws consciously, it will be observed during folktale performances that such laws are identifiable.

Apparently, the drive towards folkism is being greatly encouraged in Nigeria. Banham (1994: 68) points out that the states within the federal republic of Nigeria encourage regional events that promote regional cultural identity and in turn encourage contemporary drama to draw from the cultures of the people including storytelling of which my playwriting experience may be seen in that context. So how important are the aspects of these folktales which playwrights are encouraged to use in their creative focus? Isidore Okpewho's (1993: 223), highlights aspects of the folktale experience analogous to the plays I created in this research, as he mentions 'physical resources and contingencies' which go a long way to 'influence the effectiveness of the words of the performance, that is, the value of things like histrionics, dance, music, remarks by the narrator's accompanist and by the audience, even the narrator's consciousness of the tools of recording of the oral text.'

I am also aware that indigenous Nigerian Popular Theatre groups use folktale images or ideas in their performances. Karin Barber (1997: 191), pinpoints specific examples also prevalent in my Esan folktale experience; like, 'The hidden listeners in the coffin,' 'Friend betrays friend,' 'the theme of a man who had become rich being betrayed by his long-term friend who had remained poor occurred in many popular plays including one by the Adejobi Theatre Company,' (Barber, 1997: 191), 'The theme of house – building, both as a sign and as a source of wealth, also occurs frequently, in Gbangba dEkun among other plays' (Barber, (1997: 191). It is important to mention that those themes or motifs echo the essence of the playmaking focus of my research as well as the interventive focus of my research which highlights the human angle perspective. I am also aware of how Lere Paimo and members of his group device plays as explained by Karin Barber (1997: 190). She stated that a meeting was called and ideas were solicited from members of the group. Barber stated that some of the stories Paimo and his groups used were extracted from traditional Yoruba mythology, narratives, proverbs turned into narratives, folktales and account of events. Such account and others before show efforts to use the folktale medium in plays making and playwriting and how they echo or differ from my playwriting experience in this research.

My dramatic experiences at the University of Jos and the University of Ibadan and in Nigeria generally (Ogunbgile and Akinade, 2010: 260) are worth mentioning and exploring within a practice-led methodology. Igweonu and Okagbue (90: 2014) and Luke Dixon (74: 2014) see such experiences as the justification of the role or acceptance of 'personal experience' within the practice-led approach adopted in this study. Kolb (1994), Barrett and Bolt (2010: 5) pointed out the importance of 'one's own lived experience and personal reactions' in a study of this nature which incorporates the experiential notion. In further citing other important aspects of the practice-led approach, the notion of 'material thinking' (Carter, 2004) was also

mentioned. This validates the incorporation of personal experiences and reflections associated with 'instances of particular experience.' Bolt (2004), points out that 'knowledge is generated through action and reflection,' described as, 'materialising practices' (2010: 5). Equally important to the idea of personal experience in a practice-led research is the need to look closely at Esan folktales (Eboreime, J. 2003: 315) and other narratives in Africa; touching on how they are useful as models for understanding the narrative and didactic stance demonstrated in the plays I wrote in this research.

The worldview of the created plays has a lot to gain from the notions expressed in Esan folktales. It is through knowing the worldview evoked in the folktales that the veracity of the plays is maintained. This is understood in the context of the relevance of the cultural milieu, the African epistemological relevance, in contrast with the Eurocentric Epistemology discussed earlier in parts of this research. The thoughts projected through the words in the plays are useful for modelling or crafting meanings analogous to African identity or uniqueness. Joseph Eboreime states that words are useful for preserving the memories of the people in the Edo area (similar to the Esan experience) through songs and folklores (Eboreime, J. 2003: 313). Freisch and Stephens point out that such meanings denoted by specific concepts are outside the knowing of the European worldview (2016: 5). Anecdotally, the drama in an African performance is perceived beyond the realities of European dramatic experiences and perceptions. For example, Folktales in Africa are perceived as stimulus within the practice-led experience because of the dramatic essence, which some European minds contradict. Ngugi reflects on the nature of drama in pre-colonial Kenya to buttress the above point: That, 'Drama in the pre-colonial Kenya was not, then, an isolated event: it was part and parcel of the rhythm of daily and seasonal life of the community' a notion suggested in this research through the interventive focus, which is also evident in Esan folktales. Ngugi added that, 'It was an activity among other activities, often drawing its

energy from those other activities' thus, reiterating the anticipated vitality in the Alternative plays created in this research. Equally important is the notion that Ngugi stated that drama in his Kenyan setting then, 'was also entertainment in the sense of involved enjoyment; it was moral instruction; and it was also a strict matter of life and death and communal survival.' The last point about 'survival' is hinged on the moral lessons seen in the context of didactic notions in Esan folktales and the created plays in this research. He also added that, such 'drama was not performed in special buildings set aside for the purpose. It is therefore such a dramatic mode and outreach that is being suggested in this research, precipitated by the writing of the Alternative interventive plays; through which the memory of trauma may be synergised or actualised towards change.

It is through such realities that the memory of the trauma associated with colonialist experiences are perceived as more collective than individualised. This is because, in the world of folktales, the society acted together and suffered together in the folktale context. Anecdotally, creators of such tales perhaps used the tales to bind communal wounds through inspiring and directing the course of the communities. This is because of the undiluted meanings attached to words for knowing the depth of societal feelings. Such knowledge explains how people in the society could engage with the future. It is anticipated that when African children are shown the created plays, it would be possible for them to connect with the images in the created plays through words that resonate similar meanings in their community.

As reflected in *TFA,* words are potentially relevant in Africa. Based on the nature of the circle in the first Chapter depicting Africa in pre-colonial times (Figure 1.1) the centre and all the trappings of culture are associated with words as reflected in folktale performances, wise sayings, proverbs and exhortations. Also, in relating all the happenings in the explored texts and the created plays, words are the main sources for creating meanings as reflected in *TFA* and *DKH*. It is such

meanings that the colonialists tampered with as reflected in the texts explored; since the colonialists did not understand the meanings associated with the words reflected in the language and actions of the people. It is within such context that the importance of words is highlighted in praxis.

3.9 African Epistemology as model for stimulation and knowing about postcolonial trauma

This practice-led research also identifies with the notion of African Epistemology. Epistemology is related to the study of knowledge (Fox, 1999: 1) as highlighted in the texts explored. It is important to establish how Eurocentric interpretations are being explored in conjunction with African perspectives despite the dominance of Africa by European ideals (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 161). Within that context, Masolo (1994: 148) suggests that 'western categories' (147-148) negate African Epistemological principles. This explains the need to identify notions that have African Epistemological relevance. For example, Mimesis, 'imitation or representation' (Pickering, 2005: 104) is seen within the context of Eurocentrism; but Joe de Graft relates the same notion to 'mimetic story-telling' (1976: 1-25) which is relevant within the folkloric performance culture in Africa (Ferguson, 1968: 10-26).

In line with African epistemological conventions, is the essence of the folktale experience and narratives useful for understanding the created plays. Finnegan (2012: 337) also refers to 'a story ending up with a kind of moral, sometimes in the form of a well-known proverb.' This is seen in the structure, characters, and language used in the created plays.

Equally related to African Epistemological perspective is the transgenerational perspective and how future generations would be affected by postcolonial trauma. This is related to Osofisan's views that, 'Against the inert silence which autocrats seek to impose upon their subjects, the dissenting artist can triumph through the

gift of metaphor and magic, parody and parable, masking and mimicry' (See: the Nigerian playwright's views in Gilbert, H. *Postcolonial Plays and Anthology*, 2001, 1). Such reasoning suggests that Eurocentric epistemologies are not sufficiently suitable for defining the goals and aspirations of the imagined nation in Africa. According to Nabudere, 'African worldviews have been disenfranchised by a Eurocentric worldview that was self-conceited' (Nabudere, 2011: 68). He continued, by pointing out that 'European epistemologies and disciplines like anthropology and history' tarnished the image of the African into 'a subhuman being' (2011: 69). This reasoning is also in tune with Ngugi's thoughts on the 'decolonisation of the African mind' (1994) which suggests that, colonialist institutions like the schools, universities, theatre, and politics are perceived as having negative transgenerational connotations and impacts on the people of Africa (1994). Within that context of post-colonialism, this study is considered to be an attempt at restoring the lost, alienated and negated heritage as reflected in the created plays, suggesting the need for the restoration of African epistemologies posited by Nabudere, for transgenerational benefits (2011: 68).

In relating to unfavourable Eurocentric notions to African cultures, Nabudere (2011: 71) quoting Armstrong (1975) stated that, it might not be possible to return to 'ancient Egyptian or Inner African system' of ancient times in its original form. This is because, 'it has to be rediscovered through ways in which this knowledge has been kept alive and used in day-to-day experiences of Africans who are directly connected to this ancient African worldview (Nabudere, 2011: 71). What this connotes is how African narratives demonstrate transgenerational relevance. Within that creative context, Nabudere, added that, 'it is this ancient knowledge that can help us to reconnect with nature which Western 'scientific' Epistemology based on naturalism tried to erase from our memory and common psyche' (Nabudere, 2011: 71). It is within the scope of the meanings revealed by

many like Nabudere, (2011) that African Epistemology is understood as a tool for understanding postcolonial trauma within the created plays.

Within the context of reconnecting to 'African ancient knowledge,' (Nabudere, 2011: 71) and possibly restoring that which was erased by the Colonial Masters (2011: 71), one would begin to corroborate the notion of the erasure with colonialist experiences explored in *TFA* and *DKH*. This is linked to the bringing of all forms of knowledge hitherto disregarded by the colonialist, to the proverbial centre suggested, which is understood as an opportunity for conceptualisation and dramatisation. What this suggests is that Africans should function outside the limitations that the colonialist agenda fashioned for them. An example being the acceptance of Eurocentric development forms reflected in the plays created. Nabudere's argument (2011: 71) is related to the embedded characters in the created plays, who perceive Europe or everything European as their ultimate paradigm for development, instead of looking inward, or defining development within Afrocentric contexts. Within Nabudere's reasoning, Afrocentrism is viewed as a 'paradigm of thought and agenda for emancipation that centres on African people, history, and culture' (Ansell, 2013: 6). In that premise, Eurocentrism is understood; as a system that is 'charged with projecting a false universality' (2013: 6) capable of 'denigrating the historical and value systems of Africa' (2013: 6). This suggests that colonialism set restrictive boundaries for the African mind, which is related to Ansell's idea of colonialist boundaries. This is explained as 'unconscious adoption' of cultural terms like Eurocentrism by Africans - reflected as, 'mental or psychological slavery' (2013: 6). Ansell (2013: 6) related to Mazama, who stated that the adoption of Western worldview makes Africans 'spectators of a show that defines us from without' (2001: 387) making Africans to accept 'footnote status in the white man's book' (2001: 387). It is within such contexts and reasoning that the creation of plays in this study is understood as a way of restoring African historical and value systems (2013: 6) (Wali, O. 1963, 13-18).

In African societies, (as in my Esan experience) words are associated with good and evil (Juergensmeyer, 2014, 66). Words are also anecdotally said to be potent and could be used for good and bad purposes. They could be used to praise, encourage or curse others. So, words are potentially dynamic because of their epistemological essence. In *TFA,* such words and those who spoke them were disregarded as a result of western colonialist influence. As understood from Finnegan's reflections in this study and anecdotal notions on Esan folktales, didactic words are corrective, instructive, restorative, and motivational. According to Losambe, words 'fulfil didactic functions' (2004: 2). It is within such perspectives that the meanings attached to certain characters in the created plays are understood. The potency of words is also explained from the point of view of how words are appreciated in the African society. Earnest N. Emenyonu (2004: 183) refers to Achebe's reflection in *TFA*: 'Among the Igbo the art of conversation is regarded highly, proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten.' It is important to understand that in order to craft proverbs, one needs words. So, words have a special place in that part of Africa. Apart from seeing proverbs as 'thematic markers' Emenyonu, relates to Bernth Lindfors, who believes that proverbs, are used in Africa and from Achebe's perspective to 'reiterate themes, to sharpen characterisation, to clarify conflict, and to focus on the values of the society' (2004: 183). It is such functions that serve to explain Losambe's notion that words in Africa 'fulfil didactic functions' (2004: 2).

In exploring the usefulness of such didactic words in the created plays, it would be assumed that the creators of didactic words in Africa have motives for such words. Anecdotally, it is assumed that such words are useful for reaching generations yet unborn. For example (in *DKH*) , Olunde was supposed to carry on the tradition of his forebears and such acts are transmittable through words. For the message in the new plays to be effectively transmitted to the desired generation, (within the

context of the methodology of this research) the main vehicle for transmission would be through words that are common to the African nomenclature. This is further understood from the lens of African and African-American 'transgenerational theory' and perspectives (Rabaka, 2014: 279). In elaborating 'transgenerational theory' I will like to identify with what he believes defines 'Africana critical theory.' This is the context of 'emphasis on the often-overlooked continental and diasporan African contributions to critical theory.' The main core of his argument sits within what I have done in this research, by drawing from the 'philosophical traditions rooted in the realities of continental and diasporan African history, culture and struggle' (2014: 279). What is therefore inferred is that a foreign voice will not adequately project the voice of the people (Achebe, 1958: 158) or say what the people would like to say as reflected in the plays I wrote in this research.

Words are relevant because they hold suggestions that are special to the indigenous needs of the people as seen in *TFA* and *DKH*. In both texts, it would be observed that certain characters hold tenaciously to specific words which are associated with the ideals or cultural fortification of the nations. It would also be suggested that only the traditional people have the ability to decode all encoded meanings related to individual experiences as reflected in the texts explored in the Literature Review. It is within such contexts that the words and meanings in the created plays may be understood as apt for understanding postcolonial trauma.

3.10 Integrating the interventive perspective

Plastow's notion is relevant to this research in the sense of her view that popular theatres are institutions that employ a variety of 'theatrical expressions at grassroots level to research and analyse development problems and to create critical awareness and form the potential to solve these problems' (1996: 65 - 66). She further posited that, 'theatre is used not only to develop theatre as a form of

cultural expressions but also, and more significantly, as tool for improving life in its totality' (1996: 66). Martz's notion of 'trauma rehabilitation after war and conflict' (2010: 67) succinctly encapsulate the focus of this study and praxis. This demonstrates the pain of oppression shown in various ways in this review, linking Basil Davidson's association of colonialist oppression in a typical African nation (2014: 232). This study recognises the need for praxis that takes advantage of the 'dramatisation of trauma' (Ifowodo, 2013: 16) in Africa, which engages trauma by tackling social issues. In line with this, Martin Banham sees a new theatre emerging and beginning to 'gain a slow ascendancy' (2004: 155). He believes that this will 'offer an alternative approach and medium by which theatre can be of direct service to the marginalised urban and rural peasant masses' (2004: 115), a tradition which will see 'theatre as a forum for democratic struggle and which emphasises community, inter-personal participation in self-realisation' (2004: 115) seen in the context of the plays created in this research. This is related to Moreno's notion of dramatising the 'fractured and wounded society' (Landy and Montgomery, 2012: 184) and the people are expected to claim ownership of the theatre - 'making the theatre their own.' (Boal, 2008: 95). They would be able to express their fears, proffer solutions, and find answers associated with change, healing, and restoration of hope as praxis would open outlets within the play structure for identifying the oppressed and the oppressor. Within the context, of this study, Freire opined that, 'Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly… it is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion' (Freire, 2006: 47). It is this notion for 'human completion' pointed out by Freire that the created plays are useful for correcting negative labels on Africans pointed out by Achebe (1975: 44). He gave an example of a pupil who was ashamed because he substituted the word **Harmattan** for the word **winter**. This is similar to negative connotations of Africans reflected by Fanon (1990: 33). All these are summed up in Achebe's

comment once again, that: 'no thinking African can escape the pain of the wound in our soul' (Achebe, 1975: 44) suggesting that something should be done in the context of engaging trauma in Africa through sculpting meanings in the postcolonial present.

3.11 Integration of Conceptualisation

This practice-led research identifies with the flowing experimental structure of the created plays directly related to exploring trauma, unlike other African plays focussed on cultural, economic and political issues, reflecting Aristotelian structures (Wetmore, K.J, (2001: 45). The playmaking framework in this research reflects African folkloric nuances, as well as notions that suggest that words could be dramatically used as a tool for exploring trauma related issues. In the creation of the plays, the following were reflected; the integration of structural flexibility, the use of proverbs, wise sayings, the presentation of Voices as reflectors and the conscience of the community. The sound of the train in *The Longest Snake* has an African indigenous onomatopoeic representation easily identified in Africa. It would be seen that the created plays are more Afrocentric, reflecting the sculpturing of traumatic ambience consistent with the need to highlight notions of healing and restoration of battered identities.

3.12 Reflecting on the Alternative plays

I have created the Alternative plays for the purpose of having an alternative perspective for understanding postcolonial trauma. Such Alternative plays are perceived from another prism for viewing postcolonial trauma within the imagined nation. Whereas the initial created plays perceive postcolonial trauma from the context of everyday activities, the Alternative plays give room for symbolic actions and opportunities to include unexpected notions. The Alternative plays suggest the way forward in the imagined nation of Africa, as a tool for discovering, examining and defining the way forward in terms of reconstructing identities affected by

colonialist intrusions. The Alternative plays will sit well with the development paradigm and socio-drama. The flexibility demonstrated by the Alternative plays would encourage the use of drama outside non-elitist settings. Such flexibility would also provide avenues and opportunities for the Alternative plays to serve well as the conscience of the nation and model for channelling change within the context of socio-drama. The Alternative plays are expected to be useful within community theatre practices in different regions of the imagined nation.

Finally, it would be perceived that the method adopted reflects the need to create and conceptualise. They point out that 'creativity may be seen as a way of expanding what one knows' (2005: xxi) because the notion of knowing is akin to moving from one level of experience to another; like turning trauma narratives into trauma plays; revealing a world in which the existence of trauma cannot be negated based on the exegetical testimonies corroborated by the created plays. This is not only because trauma is perceived as part of human nature, but because trauma is inflicted by another. What is revealed is that the notions of trauma perceived in the explored texts suggest stagnation and continuous pain; while the notions of trauma in the created plays suggest aptitude to newness, development, and change through 'creative practice' (Donnelly and Harper, 2013: xv).

3.13 Chapter Summary

This Chapter sets a frame for understanding the context of the methodology and praxis in this study. This touches on how notions within Africa may be construed as models for understanding postcolonial trauma as demonstrated by praxis in this study. This Chapter also reflects the relevance of the interventive and the conceptual perspectives within the creative process. It also explains the importance of the folkloric and narrative perspectives in this study, as well as the role of African Epistemology as model for stimulation and knowing about postcolonial trauma. The Chapter demonstrates reasons for the practice-led

research and the importance of reflecting through the notion of the imagined circle and the imagined nation. Apart from explaining the importance of the Alternative plays, this Chapter generally reflects how the knowledge of the African past is relevant for actualising praxis and understanding postcolonial trauma.

Praxis Window 4

Excerpts from praxis and indicative of stimulus

Play 1	**The Chief:** What is the problem? **The Town Crier:** My wife and children have all deserted me for the city. **The Chief:** If we all go to the city, who will remain here and preserve our heritage? **The Town Crier:** Chief, which is my fear. But what should I do when my wife and children left early this morning and said I should join them there. They left by the first train. **The Chief:** What this longest snake would do has no end. When there was no train, we all lived in harmony. Now, it has opened the doors to the city and we have lost our finest youths, elders and crops. So what is going on here?	**Progression of Praxis** • As well as reflecting on notions of Postcolonial Theories and Concepts, trauma notions embedded in the Second Chapter – encapsulating *TFA* and *DKH*, I am reflecting on African folktales and folk narratives. • I am bringing in folktale contexts and images into my playmaking process – touching on the Circle and the narrative flow which is influencing the play structure. The actions and the reactions of typical folktale narrators and audience suggest trauma. The content of the tales also suggest trauma seeing the outcome of traumatic actions against some characters in the folktales – as reflected in the poor, orphans and the second wife. • I can imagine the reactions of the storyteller who mimics the reactions of pain in the characters.
Play 2	**Scene Three: Towards the end of the Storm** **1st Man:** If home was indeed home, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was home would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing? Hmm. Our main problem was water. We had to buy water and when we started running out of real cash, we would trade out cloths, hats and belts for water. Soon, we figured that it would make sense to have a guide so we all put some money together and hired one. We were so determined to get to the point where we were told we would get a raft or ferry or even a ship to take us onto Europe. Some of us had already started challenging the only engineer in our midst to come up with the design of a raft that would take us across from the most convenient point in Africa to the shores of Spain. At one stage, he had started flexing his muscles in readiness to construct a raft and had already started talking about specifications and angles. Soon, there were a few others – notably the mathematician and a geographer in our midst who thought that his figures did not add up… **Unknown Voice:** If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home…	**Inferring trauma:** • Apart from the notion of dependency, I am writing the play and reflecting on elements of education that the travellers imbibed from the colonialists. • I am reflecting on the decolonisation of the mind from Ngugi's point of view. • I am also reflecting on the pain from the middle men who feed on the misfortune of the poor immigrants – thereby leading them to misfortune and doom.

Chapter Four

How Praxis is interpreted and understood

4.1 Introduction

In this research, as a playwright and practice-led researcher, I am in support of doing and conceptualising ideas; described by Smith and Dean as, 'work in progress' (2009: 191); in that context, I am reflecting on the writing of plays. Therefore, the various sections considered in this Chapter highlight issues that are useful for interpreting and understanding praxis, which would in turn be useful for understanding postcolonial trauma. This Chapter also connects with notions like the **imagined nation**, **trauma images** and the **circle;** all useful for understanding postcolonial trauma within the created plays. The circle is conceived in the sense of 'an open space,' that is essential for dramatic representations; which connotes how meanings are initiated. It should be noted that such ideas brought into the circle are ideas associated with postcolonial trauma gleaned from the exegesis.

This Chapter is also linked to new voices which are associated with the production of new meanings. It is through such meanings (associated with postcolonial trauma and the created plays) that communities in Africa and the diaspora would be reached. The created plays, (as seen through praxis) are useful for understanding how change and development are tackled, and how communities within the imagined nation are connected.

The circles in Figure 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 of Chapter One represent different stages of praxis. In the same context, Figure 4.1 reflects how trauma images could be brought into the circle. The circles reflect how ideas brought into it are construed or meanings construed through praxis. In other words, these ideas within the circle are perceived as sources for conceptualisation, or elements that move praxis from the interpretative stage (with the exegesis in mind) to the created play. The

bringing together of these ideas within the circle shows a conscious effort to make praxis a reality; showing how the plays are created or conceptualised. It is also important to see how playmaking progresses in Appendix 1 and 2 – reflecting the focus of praxis on one hand and notions useful for exegetical interpretation on the other hand. It is also important to mention that the use of the first person has also been introduced in this Chapter to facilitate the process of explaining my subjective viewpoints as playwright, playmaker and researcher.

4.2 The Circles as diagrammatic representations

The circles in this Chapter and the research have been used as an illustrative representation of ideas in the praxis, or to explain the development of praxis. As shown in Figure. 4.1, the circles have traditional or cultural relevance in Africa and the imagined nation. The purpose of the circles is to create an image for identification or a source from which notions are conceptualised for bringing change. It is also important to mention that Figure. 4.1, shows how the development of praxis is associated with the following:

a. That various postcolonial texts have been read and found useful for developing the exegesis and understanding the plays created.
b. That there are notions encountered in the exegesis that is necessary for forming opinions.
c. That the creative process is dependent on notions associated with postcolonial trauma; which originate from an imagined circle as seen in Figure 4.1.

The reason for the above is to facilitate knowledge about postcolonial trauma in relation to how 'the perceptions of the colonised are expressed' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2003: 1). The 'perceptions of the colonised' as seen in the created plays reflect the outcomes of colonialist activities highlighted in the postcolonial texts explored (See the second Chapter – the Literature Review).

Figure 4.1

Praxis is reflected in this Chapter and this research as the basis for understanding postcolonialism, postcolonial trauma and how praxis interprets trauma notions in a typical playmaking process - (Shaughnessy, N., 2012: 61) seen as the interplay between the exploratory and creative process; revealing a 'crucial and inextricable meld of theory and practice' (Stewart, R. in Barrett and Bolt, 2010: 124).

It is important to know that notions in the explored postcolonial texts and sources suggest that there are many trauma notions that are useful for creating plays within the scope of this research. The quantification of such experiences is seen in the context of 'mass trauma' (Musisi, 2004) or arrays of trauma situations that have remained unchallenged dramatically, or gaps of knowing about postcolonial trauma reflected in the Literature review. In the initial aspect of praxis in this research, I was able to identify with Musisi's notion of 'mass trauma.' This is because of the preponderance of trauma-related issues identified in the texts explored, which suggest a culture of trauma, needing serious attention. So, as I was exploring the texts and creating the plays, I was wondering if things would ever change, or if the developed world would ever reconsider changing structures that keep one part of the globe bound; which Wutawunashe describes as, 'perpetual trauma of loss of identity and self-esteem' (2011: 114). The exploration of various postcolonial sources reveal that neo-colonialism continues unabated

(Kennedy, M. 2015: 57-71) - which does not suggest the bliss of the other (Chulu, J. 2015: 19); being the imagined nation.

So, as I read, reflected and created plays, I imagined the outcome of the created plays beyond the metaphorical notion of 'postcolonial melancholia' (Alessandrini, 2014: 162) suggesting that 'any Decolonisation is a Success' (2014: 163). This is interpreted as, the need to create trauma plays and the analysis of same for reaching out to communities affected by identity issues in Africa and the diaspora. A similar effort is seen in the Community theatre in various parts of Africa – associated with change, social action and development (Landy and Montgomery, 2012: xvii) (Kerr, D. 1995). It is important to mention that the exploration of the trauma motifs in the exegesis is important in the context of knowing about postcolonial trauma and creating. In doing that, the plots, characters, settings, began to emerge. Initially, I had thought about my experiences with other postcolonial plays and texts generally that are critical of the colonialist system but not associated with the traumatic perspective.

Figure 4.2

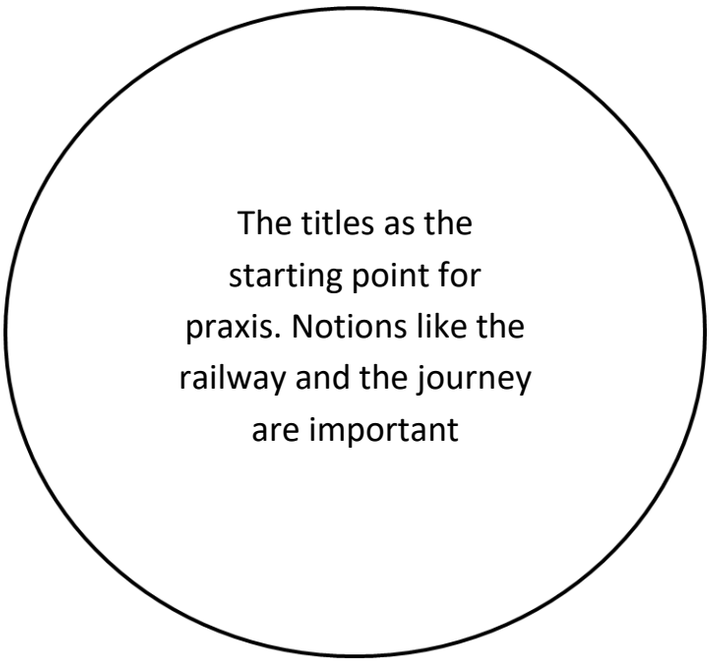
It would also be imagined that plays that are based on the resolution of issues as reflected could be a more meaningful way of knowing (See Figure 4.2) and

presenting postcolonial trauma to all in the imagined nation. This is in anticipation of concerns addressed within the context of socio-drama. Note that as I continued to read and reflect, I detached myself from the critical mode and focussed more on the trauma of the nation as I wrote the Alternative plays. I also observed that it would be possible to further create plays that would focus on the 'interpretative framework' seen within the context of the Alternative plays (Li, Sabella and Liu, *Memory and Healing*, 2002: 186-188). I also wondered how the people in a part of Africa or the diaspora would benefit; so, I added their voices as characters that would help interpret the roles. In the process of creating the first two plays, I observed that the characters created are similar to those in the explored texts who encountered similar conflicts in the region of corruption and bad governance. That is why it was necessary to create Alternative plays that would be more symbolic, focussing on representing the voice of the people imaginatively.

4.3 The Circle as a tool for praxis

The circle in this research is partially borrowed from Esan Folktale experience and the 'centre-periphery' concept (see Chapter One). As previously indicated in the first Chapter, the traumatised collectives are located in the periphery while the colonialist oppressors or those who took over from them might be located in the centre of the circle. This centre-periphery framework is useful for interpreting notions associated with postcolonial trauma. The circle is construed as the starting point for conceptualisation as mentioned previously in the first Chapter. It is anticipated that ideas are drawn into the circle for interpretation and to illustratively consider how created characters speak, react, and generally do things through words that reflect or interpret trauma. Also relevant is how the circle is perceived in African traditional performances (See Chapter One); being a rallying point for new narratives, although from a dramatic perspective. This notion has been drawn into praxis to identify with African traditional ways of acquiring knowledge in the imagined nation (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996: 126-135).

Figure 4.3



As part of my practice, I have reflected on the relationship between the titles of the created plays and the traumatic state of the imagined nation (See Figure 4.3) with images that are focussed on my part of African. I have also reflected on the essence of the titles of the created plays, *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*, as metaphorical reflections of colonialist activities in the imagined nation. Such reflections are associated with neo-colonialist activities in Africa (Echa, N., 2013: 70-79). Whereas the first play, *The Longest Snake* is based on the Nigerian Railway, the second play, *The Endless Walk* is based on emigration and human trafficking across the Sahara Desert. The titles help to consolidate notions of trauma around the imagined circle and the periphery. It is through the titles that all other aspects of the created plays like the themes, characters, settings, and mood are understood. For example, the titles, like other words used in the created plays (as seen in Figure 4.4) are useful for knowing about postcolonial trauma.

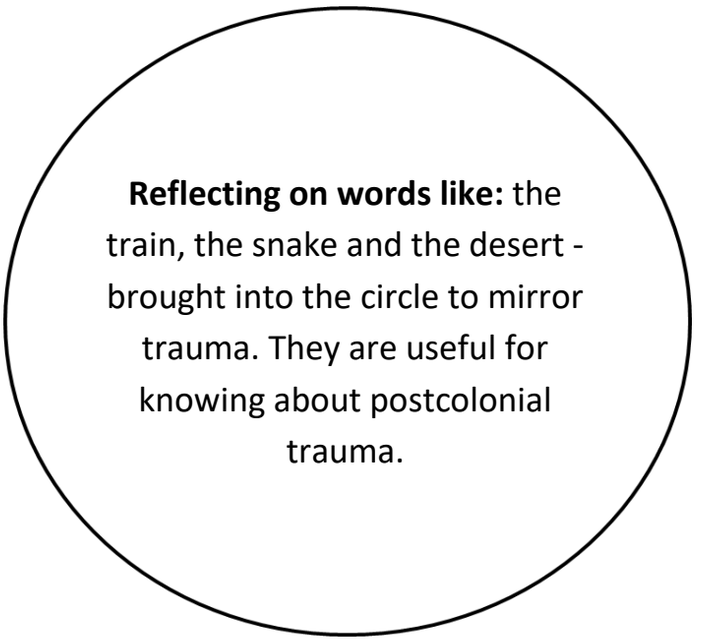
4.4 The titles as the starting point for initiating notions in praxis

The choice of titles was conceived at the beginning of praxis; associated with the experience of trauma in the exegesis. This means that both titles are associated with the experiences of people in the imagined nation and closely associated with postcolonial trauma. *The Longest Snake* is a metaphor for the Railway system

created by the British colonial Government for the people of the imagined nation understood within the context of Nigeria or any other nation in Africa. On the other hand, the idea of human trafficking across the Sahara Desert to Europe is reflected in *The Endless Walk* which reflects on the notion of dependency.

It is also important to note that both experiences in the created plays are associated with human reactions to colonialist activities in the imagined nation which are reflected through words (See Figure 4.4) in the chosen titles of the created plays.

Figure 4.4



4.5 Resolutions enabled in the 'circle' through praxis

In this Chapter, the notion of an imagined centre has become increasingly useful and meaningful for praxis. This echoes Ngugi's notion of the 'centre' in his call for the decolonisation of the mind (Ngugi, 1994: 97) (O'Flynn, 2011: 85). The notion of the centre is useful in my practice in terms of bringing elements or experiences of trauma into an imagined centre of a circle towards finding solutions or bringing resolutions. It would also be seen that the notion of the circle, focussing on the centre is culturally important in performances in Africa, 'where group rituals were performed in a circle, dancers danced in a circle, and individuals performed solos in the centre before returning to the surrounding circle of the community' (Caponi,

1999: 9). Caponi pointed that the circle activated involvement and independence (1999: 10) – reflecting the purpose of giving meaning to trauma experiences within the context of the imagined circle. Within the context of praxis, notions of trauma in the imagined Circle are being conceptually framed to evoke new voices. As praxis progressed, the roles of individuals and the collectives become clearer – reflecting how they are affected by trauma.

Figure 4.5

The notion of the centre facilitates understanding of how to dramatically resolve issues facing different social and political groups within the imagined nation and the diaspora. This points praxis towards the needs of the individuals and the collectives; reflecting hope and change. For example, issues like identity and corruption are embedded in the created plays; reflecting how colonialists encouraged or supported corruption among government officials (*TFA*, 157). Also, praxis has brought out the effect of corruption for interpreting postcolonial trauma. It is within the context of praxis that the negative role of corrupt Chiefs or compradors (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2000: 55) is visualised and understood as reflected in some of the key concepts in postcolonialism explored, the created plays, *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*. Praxis shows that some of the chiefs the Chiefs are metaphorically represented as those who abet colonialists or neo-colonialists (see *The Longest Snake* and trauma notions in Achebe's *TFA*: 157).

Praxis also shows that it is important to know how these points contribute to resolving problems anytime the idea of the circle and imagined nation are reflected in conceptualisation.

4.6 Praxis enabling more functions

This Chapter shows that through praxis, it is possible to understand antecedents associated with postcolonial trauma; like the atrocities of slavery associated with the overall impact of trauma on individuals and collectives in Africa (Eno, M.A., Eno, O.A., Ingiriis, M.H. and Haji, J.M., 2012: 9-26). There are also the negative effects of neo-colonialism as well as the assumption that traumatic experiences are capable of being carried over to subsequent generations. This suggests that the created plays are useful for engaging or addressing psychological 'treatment of ethnic minority populations' (Myers, L.J., Young, A., Obasi, E. and Speight, S., 2003: 13). It is anticipated that the created trauma plays would be useful for engaging trauma notions in the communities within the imagined nation and diaspora. The strength of the created plays in the community is understood in the context of notions embedded in the plays and other similar issues are reflected as a focal point for addressing identity notions in the communities. These may be associated with the characters, the settings, themes, language, mood and resolutions reflected in the created plays through praxis.

It is also anticipated that praxis has identified with issues which are useful for challenging notions of oppression in the community. For example, there are issues related to colonialist oppression related to various parts of Africa reflected in *TFA* and *DKH* in the Literature Review Chapter, as well as the brutalisation of writers in parts of Africa related to non-colonialist governments (Pegg, S. 2000: 701-708) (Bastian, M., 2000: 127-52). Through praxis, other atrocities associated with post-independent African nations like the killing of Dele Giwa, a prolific Journalist,

silenced with a parcel bomb during a military regime (Ukase, P. and Audu, B. 2015) is understood and clearly differentiated from postcolonial trauma.

Once again, praxis brings understanding and awareness to the needs of African and diasporan communities. This is achieved by emphasising less of the confrontational stance pointed out by Ifowodo (2013: 28-29) and the subject of 'resistance' pointed out by Byam (1999: 8). Praxis also creates awareness about the lingering effects of colonialism pointed out by Yee, as neo-colonialism (2010: 243). Images of colonisation reflected by praxis in the created plays show how western neo-colonial domination still loomed across the continent of Africa reflecting dependency (Mason, 2015: 1-13). Tobolase perceives this as, 'cultural infiltration, pollution and as well as alteration' (2016: 81-87.) Praxis created awareness about poor governmental performances in Africa, (Young, 2016: 44-57) through the images in the created plays which suggest that post-independent governmental institutions have not fared better, based on the traumatic accounts of migrants who escape the shores of Africa (Beneduce, R. 2016: 261-285).

4.7 Praxis enabling new voices

Praxis within the context of this study shows that the generation of new voices are possible. Apart from the creation of new plays, the notion behind the new voices is that the imagined nation can be all it expects to be in terms of cultural identity and relevance. So, being that there are meanings related to the created plays, the characters created in the plays are imagined to take their bearing from the proverbial centre which defines the strength of the nation (see examples in *TFA*, 1958: 158).

Praxis revealed through the created plays that it is possible to reverses the fortune of those in the imagined nation by creating new voices in the created plays:

a. The voice of intervention – related to the pain of others in the periphery.

b. The reflective voice – focussed on past issues related to trauma.

c. The futuristic voice – focussed on future issues related to trauma.

d. The voice that calls and the voice that responds; reflecting that when the folks in the imagined nation call for help, there would be appropriate response.

e. The consultative voice – here the didactic role of elders is reflected.

f. The voice of experimentation focusses on inventions that point to positive directions.

g. The voice of reconciliation focusses on the resolution of differences.

In relating more to the anticipated new voices, praxis reveals that the created plays are associated with episodic elements in African folktales (*Folklore and Folklife*, 1972: 37). This flexible creative form also shows that the characters who resemble those in the folktales have definite roles to play in the imagined nation for the good of all and sundry. Such roles go a long way to portray characters that are equipped to explain notions about working towards realist independence or fashioning true independence through praxis. Within that context, praxis also suggests that African nations deserve true economic, political and cultural freedom or independence (Eze Akani, C., 2016: 23) (Okunade, S.K. and Shehu, H., 2016: 44-48). Praxis within this context reveals that true independence devoid of neo-colonialist attachment is attainable. This is seen in the context of praxis moving the characters and the imagined nation from an imagined periphery to the centre, a point where resolutions are possible.

4.8 Praxis and the Socio-dramatic perspective

This Chapter and research identifies with Moreno's socio-dramatic form. This is for explaining the focus of praxis. Although socio-drama is mostly unscripted (Laverton, 2010: 5), this research identifies with Moreno's emphasis on the personal story of the individual (2010: 5) which is akin to the trauma narratives tackled by praxis. The notion of 'the personal story' is also linked to the trauma experiences associated with the individuals and collectives within the imagined

nation. The focus of praxis on individuals and collectives is akin to Moreno's dramatic forms focussed on groups for dramatising and solving social problems (2010: 5). Praxis in this Chapter also identifies with Moreno's perspective of socio-drama which reiterates theatre as a 'social metaphor,' and also 'asks questions of social justice.' (Kushnir, '*In Defence of Theatre*, 2016: 88) (Gallagher and Freeman, 2016: 88). Such focus is akin to the focus of praxis in this research - construed as drama interrogating problems or issues related to the development of the imagined nation.

The notion of asking questions of social justice is also embedded in the exegesis and praxis of this research. This reveals the importance of praxis in engaging social action for the good of the imagined nation and communities in diaspora. Praxis and the created plays are associated with capturing embedded trauma in narratives which explain conditions of marginalised ethnic minorities, marginalised individuals and collectives, asylum seekers, migrants and refugees seeking solutions to their social problems and connecting with various communities. It is anticipated that the notions embedded in the created plays through praxis would lead to individual and community empowerment, as well as enabling community cohesion. Praxis is useful towards tackling radicalisation, and building bridges that enhance development.

In reflecting the need for social justice, praxis is capable of identifying with issues associated with children and feminism – within the context of the imagined nation. Apart from suggesting notions of development and progress, praxis is perceived as tool for engaging peace and reconciliation. Praxis makes engagement possible because of the narrative or storytelling focus. Also related is the use of the circle for creating plays; a notion that has already been presented as related to the cultural milieu of the imagined nation of Africa. Within that context, praxis is useful for developing plays that focus on development, inclusion, delegation of power –

as well as creating new meanings that enable or suggest the need for integration within communities. Such progressive activities engendered by praxis for the benefit of communities within the imagined nation are linked to the notion that theatre is a 'social metaphor' and tool for 'social action' (Gallagher and Freeman, 2016: 88). This suggests that the dramatisation of trauma through praxis demonstrates the usefulness of engaging issues related to the individuals and collectives; possibly serving as a tool for restoration and social action.

The nature of interrogation of social justice is understood as my reflecting on issues related to folks in the periphery or outside the circle. The reason for such interrogation is the need for interventions related to human trafficking as in *The Endless Walk*, and the issue of urban drift, in *The Longest Snake*. Both created plays are reflected as social metaphors that confront issues in the imagined nation. The action of bringing folks to the circle in praxis suggests Social action. It will be noted that aspects of Moreno's dramatic theories are useful towards explaining the socio-dramatic relevance of this study – relating to the theory on roles (Sternberg and Garcia, 2000: 119). This collectivist stance echoes Sternberg and Garcia's notion that 'we have more in common with each other than we have different from each other,' a notion that is indicative of identity and the interactive roles among the collectives (2000: 119) reflected by praxis.

Within the context of this research, praxis draws on the African collective consciousness (Frith and Hodgson, 2015: 221). This is indicative of praxis being focussed on the needs of the community. It is anticipated that praxis would benefit those in the grassroots or communities and 'heal the wound of history' and also 'empower the oppressed' (Leveton, 2010: 127 and 179) as demonstrated in the created plays. This notion supports the spirit of 'ubuntu,' currently being engaged as a tool for Africanisation in contemporary South Africa (Paul, 2009: 12) This is understood in the context of negotiating collective identity and self-

determination (Alexander, etal, 2004: 107-108) reflected in the created plays in this research.

The collectivist notions stressed above are reflective of Moreno's idea that, 'The true subject of socio-drama is the group' (1953: 88) though the created plays focus on the individuals and collectives. This is akin to experiences of storytellers in Africa improvising with the help of the group, who raise songs and embellish folktales for the enjoyment of all. It is within such contexts that the created plays in this study reveal the effect of praxis in reflecting notions that are 'cathartic.' (Landy and Montgomery, 2012: 184) (Smith, 2010: 776). Kellermann, reflects on texts that are linked to socio-drama, and intervention; suggesting that they and equally important for conflict resolution and healing (Kellermann, 2007: 115). It is also important to mention that issues in the created plays are associated such notions mentioned by Kellermann and also associated with 'Theatre for Change' (Landy and Montgomery, 2012: xvii), Theatre for Social Action, Community Theatre, Applied Theatre, and Theatre for Development. With praxis in view, the created plays reflect performances that 'become a means for changing understanding, power dynamics, consciousness and behaviour' (2012: xvii). Such performance tones are identified in African Popular Theatre (Kerr, D. 1995) and The Kwagh-Hir Theatre (Hagher, 2014). Praxis has also been negotiated in this study in line with previous interventions centred around 'Theatre for Development' and 'Community Theatre' in different parts of Africa (Igweonu, 2011: 176) (Blumberg and Walder, 1999: 4-7). Such theatrical interventions focus on performances that highlight deprivation, similar to the notion of trauma in the created plays – as well as in Boal (2000) and Freire (2014). A typical example being the Ngoma experiment (Barz and Cohen, 2011: 118) hinged on 'mobilization for social change.' Prentki and Preston (2009: 10), reveal varied ways that Community Theatre is expressed within the context of socio-drama such as

Theatre for a Community, Theatre with a Community, and Theatre by a Community similar to the focus of praxis in this research.

Praxis also suggests that the moralistic messages in the created plays reflect how drama is used in traditional African communities akin to traditional folktales mentioned earlier. In this context, praxis assumes the role of storytelling, as the created plays are perceived from various spectrums that engage with societal needs and expectations. A typical example mentioned by Gallo-Lopez and Rubin is the use of drama to bring relief to autistic children and their families, thereby facilitating the enhancement of social competence (Gallo-Lopez and Rubin: 271, 2012). With this in mind, it will also be seen that the created plays would be useful in various areas of the nation like schools, churches, mosques, markets places, village halls, squares, prisons, and hospitals. This is because of the interventive focus of the plays which have embedded meanings that are useful for engaging societal issues. Roger Grainger's views (1990) corroborate the importance of praxis as he perceives the healing effect of theatre as a 'universalization of the emotion' (24). He further sees theatre as a way of gaining the courage to exist alongside other people since theatre is able to liberate both the actor and the spectator (24). Roger believes that theatre is beneficial because the message is relevant to all as they are saved from 'the crippling pre-occupation with self' (24). Grainger's notions are associated with Cyril Ives', notion of the 'Mask of Self' (1997: 77), in which he explored the therapeutic potential of masks; which suggest that the physical, emotional and intellectual aspects of the human personality can be concatenated in a meaningful way. In that context, the mask or persona associated with praxis is construed in the voices and meanings embedded in the created plays in this research.

4.9 Chapter Summary

In considering how praxis is interpreted and understood, this Chapter has explained the functions of the circles as tools for diagrammatic and dramatic

representation - useful for interpreting postcolonial trauma beyond the exegesis. The conceptual source of the circle has also been identified in this Chapter, as belonging to the postcolonial 'centre-periphery' concept. It is important to understand that the circle is also important within the African cultural milieu - especially in situations associated with meaningful performances in the community. It is this same notion that has been appropriated by praxis to meet contemporary playmaking needs. It is this same concept that is being taken back to communities; encapsulating the image of the storyteller in praxis.

In this Chapter, it is important to understand the role of the titles of the created plays as the starting point for praxis. This notion of identification captures the postcolonial traumatic voice at the very beginning of praxis. The titles are also perceived as tools for knowing about postcolonial trauma. This shows how progress could be made through a specific title even before the outline for the plays are initiated. Apart from the relevance of the titles in praxis, this Chapter reveals how the centre of the circle is being activated for attaining resolution. This means that events that happen in the centre of the circle signify strength, and a conscious effort to move the communities from the periphery, a place of weakness, into the centre of the periphery - where issues are resolved. The Chapter reflects how issues of national interest are being attracted into the imagined circle, touching on the role of antecedents in praxis.

This Chapter also explored the role of praxis in generating new voices within the created plays, highlighting the importance of new voices (highlighted earlier in the Chapter) within the imagined nation. The notion of resolution as embedded within praxis has also been explored in praxis within the socio-dramatic perspective. This revealed ways of understanding the usefulness of praxis in the wider communities, as well as the role of praxis as a viable tool for social action and community development. In concluding, it is important to mention the anticipated

transgenerational impact of praxis as a tool for generating relevant plays for the present and the future. This is because those who encounter the created plays would benefit from the embedded notions that are useful for sorting out issues related to the present and the future. They would also benefit from associating praxis with the socio-dramatic perspective. This is related to the essence of change emphasised by Jacob Moreno's socio-dramatic perspective, which is associated with the exploration of events surrounding the culture of the imagined nation (Laverton, 2010: 5).

Praxis Window 5

Excerpts from praxis and indicative of stimulus

Play 1	**The Chief:** That indeed is our problem. I think we all have to go home and think of what the eye of the future said to us. Let us walk in unity and not bring shame to this village. You are all members of this village and are appreciated for your contributions. There should be no need for petty squabbles and disagreements. The situation we are facing is more than ordinary words. **All:** True – true. **The Chief:** We must walk as one family and we must speak one voice. I will call for a long silence and then we shall dismiss. Let the trees and the shrubs hear our silence; let us respect each other after that. Silence. **The Longest Snake:** Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak	**Progression of Praxis** • I am reflecting on African folktales and folk narratives. • I am bringing my perspective of storytelling sessions in Esan in my part of Africa. The actions and the reactions of the narrator and audience suggest trauma. The content of the tales also suggest trauma seeing the oppression of some characters like the poor and oprhans. • The reactions of the storyteller are reflected on the audience who mimic the reactions of pain and suffering or jerking of tears.
Play 2	Ako: But we have to put it through the House of Assembly. There has to be a campaign and there has to be a vote. In all honesty, the constitution has to be recognised in this situation. Well, they are coming. Adu: You take life too seriously. I would rather pay attention to their questions than listen to your rantings. This is the simple answer to your first question, woman. If you open your house to the rat, it will attract more rats. As for the old man's questions, I am not a politician and my father did not benefit from the colonialists. Those that benefited took copies of the rules and regulations designed by the colonialists and made it their own. They sat heavily on the rest of us as if we were their God-given stools, preaching fresh sermons to us every Sunday through the ministers they appointed and ordained, who mixed traditional wisdom with borrowed wisdom; so they were neither here nor there. In the interim, the poor and wounded suffered.	**Inferring trauma from the following:** • The transition reflects the notion of pain as one of the characters did not even know that they had come to the end of the play within the play. • He would have expected that there would be a resolution to their problems. He is lost in the performance. • The reality of nearly reaching the final destination is equally grim. • 'We were not as hospitable and generous to each other. There was no steady flow of water and food was a rare commodity. The new Masters were wicked and strange.' • This reflects the presence of middle men or Compradors. See: Page, 61, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013).

Chapter Five

The Emerging Themes

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter articulates the emerging themes of this research, focussing on how the texts explored and the plays I created are useful for understanding postcolonial trauma in Africa. Within this Chapter, it is possible to imagine the plight of those in the periphery touching on the effect of colonisation on the individuals and collectives. Equally explored is the notion of periphery mentality in the context of the created plays - focussing on *The Longest Snake,* and *The Endless Walk*. The stimulating impact of the literary and socio-political sources may be seen in the context of emerging themes in this Chapter, as well as the role of emotive notions inferred from postcolonial trauma texts in stimulating the creative process. The emerging themes are useful for understanding how this research generates new knowledge from a practice-led approach, seeing that the practice of playmaking is useful for knowing about postcolonial trauma.

Equally important are the Alternative plays I wrote in this research, which are useful for explaining and understanding postcolonial trauma. The Alternative plays are so named because they were written after the first two plays, and influenced by the first two plays, *The Longest Snake,* and *The Endless Walk*. It is also important to mention that the emerging themes explain how praxis reinforces the meanings in the exegesis, reflecting how postcolonial trauma is understood through the articulation of traumatic notions in the created plays. It is important to mention how the centre-periphery concept highlighted in the Introductory Chapter is useful for understanding the relationship between the postcolonial texts explored and the trauma based plays I wrote in the course of this research for understanding how the stimulus gained have been explored in praxis.

It is also important to understand that the notions and meanings emerging from the created plays are useful towards knowing about postcolonial trauma. It should be noted that creating different forms of plays, apart from differentiating the conditions of the people in the imagined nation, is useful for showing the effects of colonialism and reflecting postcolonial trauma. The reflection of the 'centre-periphery' concept and the 'imagined nation' in the created plays are indicative of the presence of emotive notions associated with postcolonial trauma in the created plays. The imagined nation is a prism for understanding how the individuals and collectives in the created plays are understood; and how their identities are being restored through praxis and the meanings encapsulated in the created plays. The centre-periphery concept symbolises how trauma is construed within the context of the imagined nation. The concept is also a lens for knowing the effect of postcolonial trauma on the individuals and the collectives as well as the relevance of the created plays as tools for social action and awareness.

5.2 How notions are useful for understanding postcolonial trauma in the created plays

The first Chapter of this research provided a picture of Africa as a continent with several nations, giving a generic view of how the imagined nation is construed, and the effects of colonialism on the continent. The notion of 'my part of Africa' clearly shows how some examples have been drawn from parts of Nigeria, linking my experiences to notions in the plays I created in this research. The notion, 'my part of Africa' is also associated with the influences of folktales on praxis, associated with the gaining of inspiration or stimulus for playmaking. It is important to note that 'the imagined nation' has been coined for facilitating understanding of the traumatic conditions in Africa as seen from one perspective. Also relevant is the term, 'The plight of those in the periphery' which reflects the plight of disadvantaged folks, and those oppressed with the fringes of societies

and nations associated with Mazrui and Mutunga's notion of the 'periphery of the periphery'– referring to the marginalised (2003: 295). In the context of this research, this term is associated with the traumatic effects of colonialism, the outcome of colonialism, and the lingering effects of colonialism on the individuals and collectives in the imagined nation; and how this is associated with trauma in the created plays. The notion, 'The plight of those in the periphery' is also important because it focusses on the conditions of folks in the imagined nation. Such conditions have been enumerated in the first Chapter of this research. See the Literature Review Chapter). It is such negative colonialist conditions (captured from the explored texts) that help explain how basic emotions associated with postcolonial trauma are useful for understanding the created texts, or useful for stimulating the plays created.

5.3 The plight of those in the periphery

In the created plays and the postcolonial texts explored in the Literature Review, trauma has been explicitly and implicitly represented. Such representations of trauma are linked to the impact of colonialism on the individuals and the collectives, as reflected in the exegesis and the created plays. Such representations of trauma are associated with the actions and reactions of the characters in the created plays. Also, the atmosphere of trauma reflected in the created plays is similar to the emotive nuances gleaned from the oppressive conditions reflected in the socio-political sources explored. The atmosphere of trauma is indicative of a gloomy atmosphere which suggests that hope has been denied the characters represented in the created plays. This is understood in the context of loss of identity revealed in the characters in *The Longest Snake*, who seem to have lost faith in their village because of the coming of the Railway project. So, they choose to follow the trail of the Train; leaving their previously comfortable habitat – which suggests moving from a place of hope to

hopelessness. This connotes that the imagined nation offered nothing but emptiness. This is reflected in the disappointments, tragedies, betrayals that followed, after the grand inauguration of the Railway system in *The Longest Snake*. The core-periphery concept is related to the colonialist actions and the reactions of the individuals and the collectives in the imagined nation. This shows that the colonial masters who inaugurated the Railway were at the centre while others were consigned to the periphery. This centre-periphery concept is related to Achebe's *TFA* and Soyinka's *DKH* showing the difference between the colonialists and the colonised. In the created plays, 'the centre-periphery concept' is useful for explaining a tradition of oppression, perceived as postcolonial trauma in the explored texts and the created plays.

Such outcomes of colonisation or postcolonial trauma are captured by praxis – showing that characters in the periphery or fringes tend to solve their problems by running away from their habitat or their original place of abode. This is understood in the context of the individuals within the imagined nation running away from their original cultural base. It is pertinent to note that notions in the introductory notes and the Literature Review reflect the impact of colonialism on those habitats that they are now running away from. So, praxis has explored what has been responsible for their actions and the agents that are responsible for their conditions.

The created plays show that the escape from the imagined nation is described as running away from a place that is not helping the individuals and collectives to advance or achieve success. This is seen in contrast with the centre, which seems to have all that the periphery does not have - echoing Fanon's idea that, 'The zone where the natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers' (*The Wretched of the Earth*, 2001: 30). Since they do not have the ability to break into the centre, they are forced into uncertain mobility; perhaps to embrace futility or chasing shadows through notions indirectly introduced to them by the

colonialists or the agents of the colonialists in the imagined nation. The imagined nation, as pointed out in the exegesis – (touching on the socio-political sources) is not the dreamed nation. So, the individuals and the collectives must move from one place to another to find reality and sustenance; being reflections of postcolonial trauma as gleaned from the exegesis and the created plays. The periphery is explained as:

a. A place where marginalisation thrives; introduced by the colonialists and carried further by colonialist agents as reflected in the explored texts in the first two Chapters of this research.
b. A setting devoid of hope – as reflected in the created plays – showing characters taking the risk of travelling by Train to an unfamiliar terrain - the City as seen in *The Longest Snake*; or people travelling through the dangerous Sahara Desert to Europe as portrayed in *The Endless Walk*.
c. A setting devoid of apt leadership – showing lack of established law, or the firm authority of an established government that is capable of providing for the individuals and the collectives as seen in the created plays.
d. A setting where the dream of the individuals is to follow the colonialists to Europe as self-imposed slaves.
e. A setting occupied by those reacting against the negative actions of colonialists as seen in the in the created plays – although it is perceived as reacting against their indigenous governments reflected as colonialist sympathisers, collaborators or agents of colonialism or neo-colonialism (Nkrumah, K. 1965) (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 177-180).
f. A setting where the individuals and the collectives cannot collaborate to overcome the colonialists.
g. A setting where the individuals and the collectives are programmed to unconsciously depend on the colonialists directly or indirectly (Rodney, W. 2012).

h. A setting where the mind-set of the individuals and collectives seem to be taken over by the colonialists as seen Achebe's *TFA* and the created plays.
i. A setting where trust is lacking as seen in Soyinka's *DKH* and the created plays, supposedly reflecting negative conditions orchestrated by colonialist influence.

5.4 Substantiating the themes associated with the periphery

The following notions expressed in this section substantiate the plights of those in the periphery. For example, the individuals and collectives in the created plays reflect certain types of behaviours - associated with colonialist trauma. They seemed confused by the presence of the train, they abandon family members and relocate to the city as seen in *The Longest Snake*. In the same play, the Chief lost his authority and the collectives were disorganised. Such behaviours may be described as periphery-mentality; analogous to Fanon's 'medina mentality' (*The Wretched of the Earth,* 1990: 30) – albeit perceived in different contexts. The impression or images that the periphery creates is that the individuals and collectives in the created plays are similar to those described in Fanon's Medina as a result of the effect of colonialist policies and actions. Such policies and actions could be blamed for the actions of the individuals and collectives as reflected in the exegesis and the created plays. Also, there is also the dislocation of individuals (Ashcroft, Gareth and Tiffin, 2013: 85) being the displacement that occurs as a result of colonialist or neo-colonialist activities in the imagined nation. It is such actions that explain how the collectives in Achebe's *TFA* fell apart (1958: 124-125).

The above quote is related to Hamblet's notion that the colonialists were invaders, who 'braved the distant shores of unknown lands to import (their particular brand of civilization) to indigenous people across the globe' (2008: 196). Hamblet further pointed out that the invaders were 'cruel and barbaric,' further pointing out that,

the colonialists had a different plan as he said: 'unremittingly claimed to be bringing culture, development, and evolution to the people whom they encountered. But altruism was never a motive in colonial invasion' (Hamblet, W. C. 2008: 196). In substantiating the notion of 'periphery mentality' one would relate to the consequences of trauma generally as well as the consequences of Slavery (Shapiro, 2010: 90) with Hamblet's notion of the lack of altruism in the colonialist invasion. He further pointed out that, 'a greater number of people the colonials encountered were slaughtered en-masse in the name of the king' while others were enslaved, exploited and robbed of their lands, resources, pride, and histories. Hamblet further described the colonialists as, 'those who believed themselves to sit at the summit of the moral and human universe who compose the savages of the human world' (Hamblet, 2008: 196). It is through such surmising that postcolonial trauma is understood or construed as being consciously orchestrated. Other associated points are hereby highlighted:

a. Hamblet indicated that Christian Europe was not able to 'fulfil the demands of its God or meet its own requirements for civilized human existence.' This may be seen from the lens of how Christianity was used as a weapon of oppression in Africa, advancing the argument of Mukherjee (1985), who doubts the good intention of the colonial masters' association with African was described thus: 'When they came, they had the Bible, we had the land; and now we have the Bible, they have the land.' However, what Mukherjee does not explain about such conditions are the precolonial notions that facilitated such oppression as highlighted in Achebe's *TFA.*
b. Hamblet also noted that 'European civilization proved savage' - because they lost sight of the needs of the individuals and collectives in the imagined nation – touching on their 'peculiar strengths and weaknesses, powers and faults, cultural customs and eccentricities' (Hamblet, 2008: 196).

In relating the above points to the imagined nation, it would be seen that the characters in the created plays had no option but to react to happenings around them in their own way. It might be thought that it is not logical for those who were once oppressed to be taking the risk of walking towards the abode of those who once oppressed them (meaning Europeans) as seen in *The Endless Walk* and partly in *The Longest Snake* - seeing that the characters accepted the Railway to their own detriment. Hamblet seems to have painted the picture of the condition in the periphery in the following manner (Hamblet, 2008: 196):

a. That Africans suffered savagery in the hands of the colonialists.
b. That the savagery suffered by Africans in the colonial era left indelible marks on African societies and the psyche of individual Africans.
c. That the violence precipitated the colonialists 'rebound in private and family lives throughout the African diaspora and in the domestic and foreign affairs of African nations to-day.'
d. The above points are explained as the reasons for the reactions of the characters in the created plays.

Hamblet's reference to the continuation of colonialism as neo-colonialism is perceived in the reaction of the characters in the created plays to European ideals and ideas – like going to live in Europe, desiring things that are European. This reaction to colonialist ideas is related to Hamblet's notion that,

> Neo-colonial violence replaced the old colonial oppressions and broaden from the African continent to engulf the entire third world. Those violence too can be expected in time to rebound across the globe, as the poor struggle to emerge onto a world stage economically and politically rigged for their failure. Hamblet (2008: 196).

The stated notion above is related to the characters in the created plays who developed the periphery mentality as a reaction to the impact of colonisation. Examples may be seen in the *The Longest Snake* and The *Endless Walk*, where the characters choose to migrate from the nation to the city through the train or through the Sahara Desert to Europe. It would be imagined that they would not

have embarked on those movements if they had not encountered the colonialists, directly or indirectly as reflected in Achebe's *TFA* and Soyinka's *DKH*. This strengthens the argument, which I agree, that if the colonialists had not appeared in the nations of the characters in the created plays, they may not have been influenced to move from their nations.

5.5 Themes and notions that reiterate the periphery mentality in *The Longest Snake*

In *The Longest Snake*, the metaphorical representation of the municipal train as a long snake presents an ominous image. This is because a big snake is expected to swallow things up. So, the snake is assumed to be destructive in the sense that it has come to destroy all the good that the people have always known. In other words, it has come to divide the people; a notion that is associated with the division caused by the colonialists in Achebe's *TFA* (1958). This snake is reflected as a tool for invasion forced upon the people. The acceptance of the train is seen in the great ceremony that accompanied the inauguration of the Railway in the created play which is synonymous with the acceptance of the colonialists in the postcolonial texts explored.

In contrast with Soyinka's *DKH* (1998), the created plays tackle issues related to postcolonialism differently. This is a result of the different periods; being a direct reflection of the colonialist era, while the created plays are recent, reflecting neo-colonialist effects on the individuals and the collectives. The Chiefs or the representatives of the people are cast in the same powerless situation. In *The Longest Snake*, the Chief and the elders could not fight against the invaders or the colonialists. In Soyinka's *DKH*, the Chiefs were equally powerless in the sense that the colonialists had military presence to tackle the people if they dared to revolt. The same fate awaited the individuals and collectives in Achebe's *TFA* (1958).

From a different perspective, the Chiefs colluded with the colonialists (as compradors) to oppress the individuals and the collectives within the imagined nation in the explored postcolonial texts and the created play, *The Longest Snake.* When the colonialists were not physically present, events in *The Longest Snake* and the explored postcolonial texts show that the colonialist agents evoked similar fear and authority (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013: 62). In the exegesis and *The Longest Snake,* neither the Chiefs nor the people could do anything to defend themselves or their part of the nation. This is because of the powerful influence of the colonialist agents who behaved like the colonialists as seen in the explored postcolonialist texts in the first two Chapters of this research. They were identified as those who were not interested in the physical development of the imagined nation – but more interested in taking over the centre after the exit of the colonialists (2013: 62). Note that, even when they took over as revealed in the exegesis, there was the evident manifestation of bribery and corruption and other vices predicted by The Eye of the future, in *The Longest Snake*.

The Eye of the future
Why should I spoil the joy of my brethren?
What I am seeing is not really good
I see men taking our land
I hear many weeping and crying
I see peace snatched from many hearts…
When this happens, you must do something
Put yourself together as one…

Once again, the Eye of the Future's speech is an interventive call for unity, and a call to the collectives to move towards the centre of the circle or the imagined nation; indirectly echoing notions in Moreno's socio-drama (Laverton, 2010: 5).

The created plays reflect folks who are operating from a weak centre considering that nothing could be substantially achieved in the imagined nation. In the created plays, the folks in the play are too busy following individual goals or selfish ends instead of following the collective dream. So, since the folks in the periphery had to fend for themselves, the centre is seemingly depleted, and the goals of the

nation abandoned. This is demonstrated in *The Longest Snake* as many of the characters headed to the city to their own detriment; while those in *The Endless Walk* perilously headed towards Europe through the Sahara Desert. As in the explored postcolonial texts, the centre is depleted and affected – showing the state of the imagined nation. Therefore, urban drift leaves only a few in the periphery of the imagined nation - who are either too weak or not capable of fighting against any form of direct or indirect intrusion or oppression from colonial agents. In that context, there is a total loss of identity and the will to survive. At this juncture in the play, as in Achebe's *TFA* (1958) the centre could not hold, and the Chief was left to nurse his pain with a few of his subjects; reason being that his wives had deserted him for the city. He also mourns the death of his child killed in a gruesome way in the City. It is clear that if the people had listened to The Eye of the Future, an interventive character (in *The Longest Snake*) they would have fared better. The following quotes from *The Longest Snake* reflect the opinion of the collective about The Eye of the Future:

> **First Person:**
> What is he talking about? Has he ever spoken anything to console and comfort anyone? It's always doom, doom and doom.
>
> **The Chief:**
> We have been waiting for many years for this glorious day and we believe we will be greater than our forefathers. How can you bring this sort of scary news?
>
> **Second person:**
> You cannot turn our joy into sadness. Look again at the eyes of the gods and see if they have scraps of goodness for us. These officials are special. They are sent by the crown. How can they mean evil?

The introduction to the play says it all; revealing that it would have been possible for the folks in the nation to survive if they had listened to the prophetic voice of The Eye of the Future. *The Longest Snake* suggests that the people in the imagined nation (as reflected in the created play) are either gullible or ignorant. They are obviously not aware of the fact that the colonialists and their African agents controlled the centre of the circle while they were left with nothing in the

periphery. As in Achebe's *TFA*, the characters were confined to the periphery where they were divided, powerless and could not oppose the colonialist establishment. The train became a conduit that sapped all their economic wealth through the coast to distant nations; their population was depleted as most of them drifted to the cities for 'better life' through the longest snake. Other connotations of losses show that:

a. The colonialist agents took sides with the colonialists to oppress the people of the nation.
b. The colonialist agents felt comfortable demanding bribes and they also visibly oppressed the people. It is strange that though the colonialists were not physically present, their agents represented the colonialist's interest.
c. The coming of the train reflects the destruction of the traditions and ways of the people. Whereas they thought that the coming of *The Longest Snake* (the train) would be a blessing, it became 'a curse' as the people drifted away from the village to the city; suggesting that they had lost faith in their homeland, which had been a symbol of their sustenance and development.
d. The villagers also lost faith in the Chief, who had always been there as a guide and a spiritual leader. It is important to note that he stood the storms of time and stayed, reflecting hope in the traditional institutions of the nation, and confidence in identity.
e. The people lost their economic trees and as well as lands in the play. The traumatic effect is imagined from the following conversation:

> **First Official:**
> We have no time to waste. We will cut off all the trees in that direction.
> (The people run about in confusion).
>
> **Second Official:**
> We know what we are doing, and we serve the Crown of England. You cannot stop us from our task or we shall summon you all to court.
>
> **First Person:**
> The thing has happened. Mama Idukpon, they said that they will cut off all your colanut trees. We are finished.

The notion that the village is 'finished' suggests that the imagined nation has certainly lost a lot – opening the door for urban drift as seen in the reaction of the collectives. But the Chief, who stands as the leader of the nation tries to rally his people together as he narrates the tale titled: '*Should I help him*?' This narrative, another interventive message is seen as the way forward; if only they would be able to decipher the meanings in the narrative within the play. Unfortunately, the people of the nation had already lost their will and the 'centre could not hold' as reflected in Achebe's *TFA* (1958). The Chief in *The Longest Snake* ends his speech by saying:

> Today, we are all like that innocent man. Our community is in a pit and we have to either do something or do nothing. What are we supposed to do? The imagined proverbial man is still in the pit.

To further show how emotions are discerned in the created plays, there is the notion of dependency by the African collective on the colonialists and their agents. It seems that the folks in the imagined nation in the created plays expect the colonial masters or the colonial agents to do things for them. That is why the inauguration of the Railway brought great anticipation which did not yield development but confusion. Instead of inheriting development, the imagined nation inherited chaos. Many suffered in the village, losing wives and children to the urban areas (through *The Longest Snake*; the train) where they encountered untold hardships, pain and death.

Equally related to the untold hardships is the traumatic atmosphere in *The Longest Snake*, which is reminiscent of the painful emotions that greeted the actions of the colonialists in Achebe's *TFA* and Soyinka's *DKH*. So, what is reiterated is the pain of being subjected to the periphery; the pain of being told who the people in the imagined nation should be or what they should believe. This suggests the manifestations of the traumatic as the colonialists took over the centre of the people's existence, will, belief – thereby precipitating decolonisation as reflected in the exegesis and specifically in Ngugi's call for Decolonisation (Ngugi, 1988).

5.6 Themes and notions that reiterate the periphery mentality in *The Endless Walk*

The Endless Walk has only two main characters and an Unknown Voice. There are other characters in the play within the play. The introduction of the play states the experiences of immigrants taking the risk of travelling through the Sahara Desert to Europe. Through the main character, the reader is made to understand that there are other characters whom we get to know about from the point of view of the main character. From the narrative which the play represents, we are made to perceive the notion of the imagined nation, reactions in the periphery and the periphery mentality. The general message is that the characters wanted a way of escape from the imagined nation; similar to situations in *The Longest Snake* where the imagined nation was ravaged by the whims of the colonialists. Pathos is revealed in some of the poignant lines:

> **Unknown Voice:**
> If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?
>
> **1st Man:**
> It all started one day when a friend of mine came with one of those crazy ideas; of travelling through the Sahara Desert to Europe.
>
> **2nd Man:**
> Fantastic.
>
> **1st Man:**
> At this time we were fed up being jobless. I remember saying that all the billions of our nation were either stored in foreign western banks by our corrupt politicians and foreign business conglomerates who were busy fixing all the prices of our products and mapping us further into poverty. This was after we had tried farming and discovered that the middlemen were conniving with the foreign companies to scheme us out of our wealth and the good life. We were blocked as it is and we had nothing to look forward to.

The play, *The Endless Walk* reflect trauma from the prism of colonial exploitation and neo-colonialism as echoed by the postcolonial texts and concepts explored. The agents of colonialism are the same as those in *The Longest Snake,* who are the kith and kin of the colonised. Events in the created play reflect folks who

are stuck in the periphery, while the colonialist agents control the centre. In that context, nothing good came to the majority in the imagined nation. So, the resultant reaction to the continued oppression is the choice to travel to Europe by land; electing to face the dangers that lurk in the Sahara Desert. The question that would engage an imagined audience is why any individual would choose to risk his or her life by travelling through an uncharted route? What situations would have warranted leaving home? The recurring themes inferred are poverty and the loss of identity. Even those who succeeded in reaching Europe are caught in the same web of loss as seen at the end of the play. This is associated with the periphery mentality, configured from the prism of deprivation as reflected in the exegesis. There is also the theme of ignorance. This probably emanates from dependence on second or third-hand information of those who travelled or attempted to travel through the same route as seen in the play.

The following conversation sets the scene as the main character in the text introduces how he tried and failed to travel through the Sahara Desert to capture his dream. The second narrator is one who is interested in taking a risk. There is an the opportunity to know and learn about the first man's narrative wrapped in regret and failure, (a didactic notion, suggesting the impact of the periphery mentality which is related to the impact of colonial mentality reflected on earlier), the second man refuses to learn because he has his own plan.

> **1st Man:**
> My dear friend, since you are so determined to go on this trip, I will spend the time to tell you my story. Do you have the time to listen to this story that sounds like a folktale?
>
> **2nd Man:**
> Yes – it will inspire me in certain ways.
>
> **1st Man:**
> You don't want to hear my story.
>
> **2nd Man:**
> There are countless young people who are thinking of this same trip. I am not the only one. Your story will be very helpful.

1st Man:
I shouldn't have taken that route to Algeria. At least I am back home with loads of regret. What difference does it make? I am home at last to my friends and family – whatever that means in the face of extreme poverty and frustration. There are many that were less fortunate; their bones litter the Sahara Desert. It now seems like a dream.

2nd Man:
Tell me everything – I want to hear it all.

The narrative style of this created play is reminiscent of the didactic form inherent in African Folktales. Like most African folktales, this play is similar to African Folktales where characters embark on dangerous journeys to seek fortune. The First Character said: 'It all started one day when a friend of mine came with one of those crazy ideas; of travelling through the Sahara Desert to Europe.' This 'get up and explore' notion reflects the state of desperation and the urge to seek freedom. The meaning reflected is that the people of the nation should be able to look within their cultural environment or move towards the centre of the imagined nation for solutions or resolutions. The narrative reveals that the travellers are determined to succeed at all cost as seen in the following lines:

1st Man:
We were determined to travel and reach our destination – any European city. We believed that if we get there, life would change for us and we would survive. We were also dreaming of the sort of images that adorned postcards sent by friends who had made it to Europe.

Note that the ambition of the travellers is obviously a pipe dream that is not based on any solid plan or preparation. In this context, the individual is blamed for not taking time to reflect on the intended journey; and the nation should also be called to account for individuals who are wilfully leaving the nation to explore the unknown. The Unknown Voice, the conscience of the nation would not be blamed as the following lines were repeated all through the play:

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

This unfolding event in the play reflects the notion that the imagined nation had totally abandoned the people of the nation, leaving them to construct their way of

escape and survival. In the created play, there is no indication that the government is interested in stopping the travellers from the dangers of the desert. One would have expected the government of the nation to be aware of the dangers and to warn the citizens. As indicated in the drive exhibited by the characters in the play, even if the characters in the play were warned, they would not have heeded the warning. They seemed determined and nothing could stop them. The characters, seen and unseen are reflected as totally ignorant of the rules of travelling through the Sahara, and from all indication, they had some knowledge which was not good enough as perceived in the following lines:

> **1st Man:**
> We met more folks along the way who seemed to know what they were doing but we soon found out that they were even worse than us in terms of finding their way in the obscure desert.

This suggests the blind leading the blind. But in all these, the play reflects elements of camaraderie and entertainment; suggesting that the travellers did all they could to stay alive. There are uncanny situations which the travellers experienced – meaning that they had the choice to abandon the journey and return back to the periphery - a reflection of suffering in their nation. The first man actually agreed with the Unknown Voice in echoing the notion that if home was really great, they would not have attempted the trip. This is an honest acceptance of failure, both on the trip and in the periphery. This shows that the trip should not have been embarked upon in the first place; but seeing that they had no choice, they were willing to put up with all sorts of difficulties ranging from strange behaviours, abandonment, adverse weathers, strife, and death in the camp. Through the play within the play titled: THE DESERT STINGS, WE ARE STILL HERE, we are (through flashbacks) able to learn more about the imagined nation they departed from and the conditions that the characters faced in their nation. So the play within the play is more like a parable. It seemed like the characters were trying to resolve the situations in the nation by dramatising the

activities - portraying a reflective theme or a necessary flashback to keep the vision of the imagined nation alive in their minds. Also, the characters in the play within the play seem to be the eyes and ears of the imagined nation, reflecting situations in the centre of the imagined nation as seen through the same character with new names:

> **Adu:** Just act along, like a government inspector that seems to have a big office with little or no job attached to his big name. At least we can do better (Turns to the crowd) What's wrong with that child?
>
> **Ako:** He's lazy; what a waste to the continent.
>
> **Adu:** Don't be too quick to pass judgement like most western educated people do. On close examination, I can see that he is weak and tired; I think he's famished.
>
> **Ako:** He certainly has a mother and a father. What can we do for him?
>
> **Adu:** It's a play; there nothing we can do now. Let's keep the sermon rolling. That might revive him.
>
> **Ako:** Hmmm. Look carefully to your left; look.
>
> **Adu:** You are always seeing things.
>
> **Ako:** Can't you see those defiant children?
>
> **Adu:** I know them. Those ones in military fatigues. They are child soldiers. If you look carefully, you would see warlords behind them. Can you see the warlords?
>
> **Ako:** Who's equipping them with those weapons?
>
> **Adu:** You are asking too many questions. If we have to research the whole lot, of who is asking for the arms, who is manufacturing the arms, who is designing the arms, who is paying for the arms, why the people have to face each other with those dangerous arms, why children have to be involved, why the parents have to allow their children to be taken in the first place or if they were forcefully taken from their parents…

At the end of the play, the element of pathos is expressed, as the main narrator does not succeed in convincing the other character not to embark on the same trip. The main character reveals his pain, claiming that he had laboured in vain by taking so much risk. One would have expected the character who did not travel continue educating others in the nation about the narrative, warning them against taking such gruesome risk. This goes to shows that there is no purgation on the

part of the second character because he is poised to try, even if he fails in the process. At the beginning, one would have anticipated that the notion of conflict reflected would have convinced the second character not to embark on the dangerous trip. So, despite the fact that the second character lived through the cathartic motions in the play, he refused to change and be purified. This says a lot about the traumatic notions in the imagined nation and the way the people in the nation feel about the traumatic conditions associated with colonialism explored in the exegesis in this study. The dreadful desert experience is related to the notion of dependency and the core-periphery concept; meaning that Europe is seen as the hope of those in the periphery. This precipitates the questioning of the independence and nationhood of African nations.

The notion of poverty and ignorance are emerging notions in the created plays – touching on similar notions reflected in the exegesis. The fact remains that if the individuals who travelled through the desert in the created plays had the means of survival within the imagined nation, they would not have taken the risk to travel the way they did. On the issue of ignorance, those who live in the desert nations of the Sahara Desert would not have problems with walking on the desert because it is definitely part of their nature. But the travellers from the imagined nation are ignorant of the nature of the desert and not familiarised with the harsh conditions depicted in *The Endless Walk*. What is suggested is that the desert is a strange terrain; knowing that they have never set their feet on sand dunes; neither do they understand the extreme dangers associated with the Sahara Desert. What is strange is that those who travel through the desert brave it all to embark on the trip, not knowing what to expect in the Sahara Desert. It is unlikely that they are aware of the strange conditions, including the fact that there would be no familiar faces to turn to in case of difficult moments as demonstrated in *The Endless Walk*.

Another emerging notion is the source of knowledge or information about the wealth in Europe or the notion that life is relatively comfortable in Europe. The source of their knowledge might be through some others who have tried travelling to Europe in the past and succeeded where many failed. It is suggested that the preponderance of European texts in Africa are useful sources for knowing about the difference between Europe and Africa or the imposed western education on Africans, described by Ngugi in *Decolonising the Mind* as, 'what followed the cannon' - 'the new school' (1988: 9). Also, the information from the characters in the play corroborate the socio-political notions explored in the exegesis. It is unlikely that the characters depicted in the created play *The Endless Walk*, know the dangers that accompany such trips; but they were determined. They just want a way out of poverty – described as extreme suffering and pain.

There is also the myth that the west holds the key to solving all problems of the African, that the European colonialist settlers should be blamed for the education they inculcated in the people who wanted to be like them, as seen in the case of the Igbos in *TFA* who drifted to the side of the missionaries, or acted like the colonialists; or even used the colonialists against the people (Achebe, 1958). There is also the notion that the west or Europe is the main hub for acquiring fortune and success. There is the attraction to Europe even if people have to risk their lives to get to the shores of the 'promised land.' There is the lure to Europe through the advertised lifestyle of Europeans echoed by the western form of education projected by the colonial governments despite the notion that Ngugi stated that, 'the language of our immediate and wider community and the language of our work in the fields were one. And then I went to school, a colonial school, and this harmony was broken' (1988: 11).

The theme of disappointment is seen in the fact that the main character in *The Endless Walk* was repatriated back to Africa; a traumatic event touching on

rejection by the same colonialist nations who supposedly engrafted the love of Europe in the mind of the illegal traveller as seen in the explored postcolonial texts. The returnee is left to nurse the pain of his excruciating experience on one hand and the shame of not achieving his aim, sharing his pain with the collectives in the imagined nation. The irony is that others would like to attempt the same journey; a notion reflected through the second character in *The Endless Walk*, who still insists on embarking on the same trip.

5.7 Understanding postcolonial trauma from literary and socio-political sources

As stated in other Chapters in various ways, the explored socio-political texts reflect on the perpetuity of the wound sustained from colonialism. The same notions of the wound are reflected in the created plays as well as in *TFA a*nd *DKH*. Although Achebe's *TFA* is not a play, the explored content provides valuable information on colonialist activities which are related to actions in the imagined nation. The notions related to the impact of colonialism suggest that the inflicted wounds are deep; this is based on the reactions of the characters portrayed in the explored socio-political sources that do not seem to have answers to the oppressive actions of the colonialists and their traumatic plights. Praxis seems to be a way of explaining the wounds based on the knowledge garnered from exploring some key concepts pf postcolonialism. This is because such knowledge is useful for understanding postcolonial trauma from the point of view of the effect of postcolonial trauma on the mind and body of the individuals and collectives. From a close observation, it would not have been possible to appreciate the impact of postcolonial trauma on individuals and the collectives without the knowledge from the literary and socio-political texts or sources.

5.8 Trauma motifs in sources explored as stimulus for understanding postcolonial trauma

It is important to note that trauma elements and motifs that occur in the created plays are related to the texts explored. If such emotive notions occurred in the explored texts, they can possibly occur in the imagined nation. This makes such elements useful for conceptualisation and understanding postcolonial trauma. It should be noted that although the ideas in the explored texts were not copied word for word and transferred into the created plays, their intrinsic and extrinsic undertones reflect connotations that are associated with trauma. The created plays are based on inferences made that show similarities between ideas in the explored texts and the created plays. The created plays are a reaction against colonialist activities, using sources like Achebe's, *TFA* and Soyinka's, *DKH* as stimulus. It is important to mention that the explored texts and the created plays are understood from the same prism of postcolonial trauma. This is because the emotions of trauma reflected in the created plays corroborate the emotions of trauma extrapolated from the postcolonial texts. So, in concluding this section, it would be important to relate how colonialist activities are linked with emotive outcomes associated with trauma, rejection, suspicion, anger, hurt, disappointment, humiliation, insecurity, threat, ridicule, violation, hostility, aggression, disillusionment, and many others which are visible in the exegesis and the created plays. Such emotive outcomes are useful for understanding the nature of trauma in the created plays as reflected in the exegesis. Trauma elements are also perceived through the following emotive points:

a. The postcolonial texts analysed - Achebe's *TFA* and Soyinka's *DKH*.

b. The emotions of trauma reflected in the created plays which corroborate the emotions of trauma reflected in the postcolonial texts.

c. The emotions of trauma reflected in the explored socio-political texts and sources also corroborate the emotions of trauma reflected in the created plays.

d. The emotions of trauma inferred from the created plays.

5.9 Themes useful for understanding how this research generates new knowledge

The new knowledge generated is reflected in the following contexts: Firstly, there is the articulation of meanings from different postcolonial and African epistemological sources. Secondly, there is the creative engagement of the sources articulated for playmaking. Thirdly, there is the socio-dramatic relevance of the created plays, as well as the transgenerational relevance of the exegesis and the created plays (Nabudere, 2011: 68) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013: 100). In the process of generating new knowledge, this research pushes the boundaries of knowledge by finding relevance in African folktales a platform for re-narrating trauma. The narrative form reminds the reader about the importance of the African Folktale milieu as a conduit for developing new plays that directly address trauma. This is reflected as a familiar voice, the folktale medium used to engage a familiar problem. From a transgenerational point of view, it would be important to sustain meanings in the imagined nation by using a familiar cultural form rather than adopting a Eurocentric trajectory. It is anticipated that images and cultural notions in literary and non-literary sources would continue to have relevance within the imagined nation and the diaspora. For example, this research has brought images like Okonkwo (Achebe, 1958), Elesin (Soyinka, 1998), and the traumatic happenings around them are considered signposts for continuing the postcolonial trauma discourse, touching on relevant aspects of culture that help explain postcolonial trauma.

5.10 Engaging praxis through alternative themes and plays

This section reflects an alternative form of engaging praxis which is different from the form used for creating the plays. This form engages ideas that reflect postcolonial trauma in a more direct form. The needful rhetorical question is: What

is different or new about this modus of praxis? The difference is seen in the way praxis is positioned, showing a different structure or which is different from the created play on one hand and of the created plays and existing Nigerian or African plays written by, Bode Sowande, Sonni Oti, Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Efua Sutherland, and many others. This alternative form is indicative of the need to develop a modus that is different – seeing that the created plays, *The Longest Train* and *The Endless Walk would* pass for any postcolonial play. Plays like *DKH* and *Once upon Four Robbers* (Femi Osofisan, 1991) have similar postcolonial trajectory like the created plays apart from the direct focus on trauma by the created plays. The similarity is perceived within the following areas: the recognisable nuances, characterisation, settings, mood, meanings and language. The plays written by Soyinka and Osofisan are not of the same genre as the created plays, but they bear similarities in terms of scripting and structure. The distinctive difference is that the created plays emphasise the direct engagement of postcolonial trauma – whereas those written by Soyinka and other writers focus more on cultural images and nuances (Richards, S.L., 1987: 280-288). Soyinka's plays are more culture-bound and pre-colonial than Osofisan's play which is more contemporary with radical elements (Awodiya, 1995: 56). Whereas Soyinka's is more prone to critiquing colonialism, Osofisan's is more prone to critiquing neo-colonialist agents and the government (Okunade, S.K. and Shehu, H. 2016: 44-48).

There is the relevance and veracity of praxis as being able to generate shorter plays that are capable of demonstrating notions of postcolonial trauma. This is relevant for inculcating a theatrical form that would be relevant to all and sundry in the imagined nation - not just the educated class. This is suggestive of an experiment in a laboratory, where certain elements are tested against other elements with the purpose of reaching better resolutions or conclusions in the context of what they represent to the imagined nation. It should also be noted that the Alternative plays are relevant for knowing how the people in the imagined

nation or the periphery would react in the present and the future. The created plays are useful for dramatically explaining, defining and putting notions in context – suggesting that praxis, as indicated in this research is a viable way of understanding and manipulating ideas within the postcolonial trauma context. Joan Moore's (2010: 6) experiment and the use of vignettes is similar to notions of praxis in this research:

> Stories both real and imagined, when played out in visual and dramatic form are a means of sharing emotional experience while helping reconstituted families develop a new and shared identity which encourages their children to work through blocks so that, in place of perceiving themselves as damaged victims, children reconstruct their past hurts, painful losses and indignities as evidence of heroic survival.

Also, Alan Reed's notion on dramatic intervention is related to praxis as he states that, 'The Lazarus effect reminds us that the last human venue, unlike the irreparable world' is a place where humanity is given the opportunity to 'begin again,' and to 'recall how intimate an engagement could be, and how truly political such reticent acts could become.' His views, summed up as, 'the banal miracle that is performance' (2011: 151) are indicative of the essence of the interventive focus of this research, touching on the opportunity to create new plays based on issues that affect the community within the context of giving the imagined nation another chance to reconsider aptitudes and options available in the centre of the circle.

5.11 Characteristics of the Alternative plays

This suggested form is reminiscent of the Community Theatre approach in parts of Africa (Igweonu, 2011: 176) (Blumberg and Walder, 1999: 4-7). The created plays – including the Alternative plays have 'the markers of postcolonial drama' cited earlier in the first Chapter of this Thesis (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996: 11). It is important to note the following highlights - suggesting that there should be room for improvisations. The notion is that there should be no barrier between the script and the audience when the play is eventually performed.

- Even if a script is not written, there should be an opportunity for the audience to participate – suggesting flexibility (Barnes, 2014: 50-51).
- There should be one or more characters – including unseen or incidental characters sourced from the audience.
- Characters are free to introduce topics, issues and add notions that would be useful for understanding postcolonial trauma.
- Characters are also free to determine when the play should end, or when a new topic should be introduced.
- There should be the descriptive and narrative part to the Alternative plays. This would help the audience to know the transition from one aspect of the play to another. In this case, the audience is made to know what is being brought into the circle, in terms of other characters and notions that are relevant for understanding postcolonial trauma.
- The play should refer to or establish the notion of the centre and periphery in the mind of the audience. Those in the centre and periphery should be mentioned so that the audience would understand their roles. The imagined nation should also be referred to or mentioned as the scenario is set.
- A narrator might be incorporated to communicate happenings. There should also be the call and response pattern as seen in traditional African performances (see ABAYOLE, Appendix 3).
- It would be relevant to call for resolution at the end as a means of initiating reconciliation and closure.
- The purpose of this dramatic approach is to enhance voices within the imagined nation by reflecting ideas directly, which emphasises the accessibility of drama to all and sundry in the imagined nation.
- Whereas the pro-western tradition is to have drama in important buildings – like theatres and theatrical stages in Institutions, this form encourages the

dissemination of drama as well as the differentiation of drama; making drama more accessible.

- Through Alternative plays, it is anticipated that the meanings associated or inherent in postcolonial trauma would be accessible to those in the imagined nation and the diaspora for the good of the nation. A dramatic structure that is geared towards the issues of the imagined nation would mirror and help define and explain notions relevant to the imagined nation.
- This dramatic approach draws more from the storytelling and Folktale forms (Danby and Kemp, 1982).

Once again, the Alternative plays are related to Niamh Malone and Carmel O'Sulivan's (2011) exploration of the Bolger's theatre of poetic storytelling in community theatre (240). Once again, Perry's (2012), notion of the Image Theatre is useful within the context of the created plays - touching on the use of images for pedagogical and dramaturgical advantage for decolonising communities and individuals. The focus of praxis in the Alternative plays is understood in the context of a play which 'invites participants to play in the space between aesthetic representation and social reality for developing counter-hegemonic stories, identities and subjectivities' (2012: 103). (Rogobete, 2015: 66).

5.12 An exploration of the stimulus African Folktales bring into praxis

This performance is particularly related to the flexibility highlighted in the Alternative play reflected in this Chapter. This performance also relates to the background associated with the created plays, the African experience and world-view which is similar to notions in *TFA* and *DKH*. In reflecting on this folktale performance, it is possible to understand why certain African traditional ideas were reflected in the created plays. The Folktale performance corroborates some meanings in the created plays – like the notion of the **Eye of the Future** in *The Endless Walk* and the notion of the **Snake** in *The Longest Snake*. This shows how

images in the created plays are related to images in typical African folktales. This also suggests that the created plays would be easily associated with issues in the imagined nation in Africa – knowing that such issues mirrored are relevant for purposeful praxis – linked with drama for social development. It is also important to mention that the performance of folktales and enactments in 'my part of Africa' associated with bringing ideas into the circle or the centre has been useful in the sense of suggesting progress and change within the imagined nation.

The associating of the play writing focus of this research with the Folktale performance medium shows the cultural richness of the imagined nation in one hand, and the purpose the imagined nation serves on the other hand towards the understanding of postcolonial trauma in the context of highlighting social development and change. This is related to Prentki and Selman's definition of Popular Theatre as the creation of plays that are relevant to the lives and apprehensions of the audience members, a process is initiated 'which can lead to deeper understanding and change' (Gallagher and Neelands, 2014: 91). That understanding of change is identified in the created plays since the embedded meaning is the need to understand postcolonial trauma which is related to the change anticipated in the imagined nation.

Within this context, Rogobete opined that 'people reconstruct their selves through the stories they tell about their past and the meaning they ascribe to the present in anticipation of the future. They shape their stories through active and creative interpretation' (2015: 66). The bringing of ideas into the circle is perceived beyond Hamlet J.D's notion of seeking 'place and order in chaos through symbolic gesture, action and words' but rather understanding 'the root of oral witness, a statement about the importance of the story of the people, about the circle embracing us in an African cosmology of meaning' (Hamlet, J.D. 1998: 149).

5.13 Introduction of the first Alternative play – based on notions in *The Endless Walk.*

As in the created play, *The Endless Walk*, this Alternative play *The Endless Walk-2* is also based on the experiences of immigrants taking the risk of travelling through the dangerous Sahara Desert to Europe. The plot of the play features a man who travelled with many others across the fierce weather of the Sahara Desert. It is obvious that they are economic migrants. Although he and a few of them were nearly marooned, they made it to Spain through the Mediterranean Ocean, where they faced uncertain expectations.

The Characters:

- The 1st Man
- The 2nd Man

Other characters might be brought into the Circle and there would be stage directions as in the other created plays.

5.14 The Synopsis of the first Alternative play

The 1st Character introduces the play – telling the audience the purpose of the play - to narrate a failed attempt to travel across the Sahara Desert to Europe.

a. The 1st Character invites others who are interested in the Act to appear on the stage.

b. The 2nd Character appears and perhaps other characters. The 1st Character explains how the characters are managed within the play – based on the number of characters on stage.

c. The 2nd Character asks a question. The 1st Character prompts the asking of questions for developing the plot.

d. The 1st Character introduces the centre-periphery concept - explaining the problem of colonisation and how this could be affecting the mind-set of the folks in the nation.

e. The 1st Character asks the 2nd Character to tell the audience about the two ways of travelling to Europe from Africa. The travel by land and travel by air are explained.

f. The 1st Character further asks him to explain to the people as he explains the reactions of members of the audience who are shocked about travelling by land.

g. The 2nd Character asks a question: 'Who would like to travel by air?' A census is taken. The audience is also asked about those who would like to travel by air. Majority of them respond as indicated by the feedback of the second census.

h. The 1st Character begins to narrate a personal ordeal of travelling through the Sahara Desert - explaining different stages of the travel that include the discovery of dead immigrants who suffered and died in the desert; the frustration of people in the desert, slavery, dangers, bribery of local officials and many other ordeals.

j. The 1st Character encourages the audience to ask more questions or to add their experiences - if any.

k. Other events take place - indicating conflict, progression or the end of the play.

5.15 The Synopsis of the first Alternative play, *The Endless Walk - 2*

The experiences related in the synopsis are useful for explaining postcolonial trauma. In the context of bringing ideas to the centre, members of the audience are asked to say what they would like to see on the stage. The main challenge is the ability to control or direct the play in such a way that there is a semblance of structure. In the context of this play, any action related to issues in the exegesis is acceptable – so long as the purpose of the play is reached – which is to understand and explain postcolonial trauma. Other topics or ideas conceptualised within the imagined nation could follow this form of praxis. The settings in the Alternative play echo the contexts of explored postcolonial texts, the imagined nation and the traumatic emotions reflected are similar to the emotions related in the exegesis and other created plays. The characters in the created plays and the Alternative plays represent individuals and collectives in the

imagined nation; and are indicative of the folks affected by postcolonial trauma in the imagined nation. Although the form of the Alternative plays is different from the created plays the notion of trauma reflected is similar.

One of the emerging themes from the Alternative play is the perception that there could be a variety of ways to create plays and reach the similar purpose of understanding trauma. Another emerging theme is the need to create plays that project the issues in the imagined nation from different perspectives. It is important to create plays accessible to all and sundry in the imagined nation. The theme of empowerment is highlighted here, seeing that more folks in the imagined nation would have the opportunity to contribute praxis; a notion that is not available in the written plays, *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*. This may be associated to Perry's earlier notion of the 'Image theatre' linked to the need for change in the imagined nation (2012: 103). The opinions of those in the imagined nation reflect empowerment generated through likely performances in town centres, churches, mosques, village squares, prison yards, school compounds and other spaces in the nations in Africa and the diaspora. This is good for praxis because it highlights the importance of making theatre less elitist. This further echoes Moreno, who believes that theatre should be a tool for servicing the community (Kushnir, *In Defence of Theatre*, 2016: 88) as reflected in the plays created in this research.

5.16 Exploring the synopsis of the second Alternative play

Title: Step in; don't step out of the Circle

Introduction: Using the storytelling medium, the main character describes the settings and locations of this play. He relates to the unseen audience by telling them how to relate to the centre and the periphery and what they would gain. This play is directly related to the centre-periphery notion. It also draws from the images in African folktales. There is also the element of flexibility

reflected in the first Alternative play. Within the context of creating Alternative plays, it is important to understand the plot of the new plays.

a. The created plays – *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk.*

b. The Alternative play based on The Endless Walk – Endless Walk 2.

c. Then the second Alternative play, *Step in; don't step out of the Circle*.

5.17 The Play: Step in; don't step out of the Circle

In this Alternative play, the flexibility of creating notions of postcolonial trauma within a circle is reflected - using notions related to the imagined nation.

- The Narrator and main Character wonders why the unseen characters are being frustrated in their environment. He describes all that could have gone wrong amongst them based on the reactions that he recounts.
- He is calling and responding at the same time.
- He announces all that he is bringing into the performance – if they are willing to listen to him. He mentions that he would like to bring the people to perform with him, he would like to bring their oppressors – meaning the agents of the colonialists. He also said he would like to bring himself.
- He tells the audience about their location - the periphery – which he says reflects poverty and deprivation. He makes them realise that they do not have the will to fight. Why? They had been restrained by the colonialists to act in certain ways.
- He demonstrates the compulsory dances they have been restricted to; which are: I must follow follow blindly dance - I must hate my language dance - I must eat European food dance - I must dance the European dance - I must buy everything European dance – I must wear European skirt and blouse – I must steal and save money in European banks.
- He also reminds them that it all started during the colonial era. He asks: Who are those with backpacks heading to the city? He announces that they are tired of the rural area which is no longer yielding crops. He urges them to run into the centre of the circle. But he says that they look confused. He keeps encouraging them to run into the centre of the circle.
- He's now laughing at them. He announces that they are chained; explaining a certain periphery-mentality. He explains why they would keep running from the rural area to the city, from the city to the rural area and back to the city. He urges them to run into the centre of the circle.
- He says he wants to separate the goats from the sheep if they would allow him. He says that he seeks to settle them in the centre; but the problem is that they

are confused because they do not know how to live in the centre. This is because the colonial agents did not teach them how to possess the centre. He calls for a few bold ones to volunteer into the People's Force - Why? They have to learn how to reclaim the centre from the agents of colonialism and neo-colonialism.

- He describes the periphery as a place of slur, deprivation, fear, hatred for self, lack of motivation and communal strife.
- He begins to count the number of those volunteering. He announces that about a hundred young people and even old ones have volunteered.
- He states his plans for them, including the programmes for their education; education for re-entry, survival at all cost, building a great nation, making money from rural produce, claiming what is ours in the world market. He punctuates his statements with - Step in; don't step out of the Circle.
- He watches the crowd and describes the excitement on their faces. He's also excited as he leads them in a song. They are all happy.
- He stops the song abruptly. He announces that he can see people in the crowd giving gifts to the people. He counts the number – surprised that the number is diminishing. He begins to shout - telling them to step into the circle.
- He's giving them instructions on how to jump to the centre but they are also asking him questions. He takes time to answer all their questions ranging from what they would eat, where they would sleep, how they would dress and what they would be paid.
- He's trying to explain that the focus should be on the lessons and not the immediate gratification that lured many away.
- He announces that he's lost them all. He's now asking the audience if he should continue his ranting or join them. The process continues all over, depending on the reaction he gets from the audience.
- He tells the audience that most of the people would like for him to undertake the process once again. He continues – as in the beginning.

5.18 Discussion of the Synopsis - the second Alternative play

Like the first Alternative play, the second Alternative play is based on improvisation, as no script is required like *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*. The play form indicates that through flexible praxis, more plays might be created for explaining and understanding postcolonial trauma. The notion of flexibility is also reflected in the first Alternative play seeing that there are only few characters and a basic structure. This play also suggests that it is possible for the

folks within the imagined nation to be mobilised to participate in enacting issues that concern them. The role of the main player makes it seem that the performers are actively involved in the play. The main character is seen asking questions and taking the lead in helping the intended audience to visualise meanings around him. The use of symbolic representations in the play brings out meanings that are useful for projecting notions integral to socio-drama. Once again, this play echoes Moreno, who believes that theatre should be used as a viable tool for servicing the society as also reflected in other created plays (Kushnir, *In Defence of Theatre*, 2016: 88).

5.19 Chapter Summary

This Chapter has articulated themes from the created plays and other aspects of the research. This is for imaging postcolonial trauma through the texts explored; key concepts in postcolonialism reflected on and socio-political notions which are linked to the research questions. The emerging themes show that the research questions are pivotal to the stimulation needed for praxis to take place - making playmaking a reality. This Chapter also shows the connectivity between all the aspects explored, as well as their functionality - showing the relationship between the exegesis and praxis. This Chapter has also reflected how some post-colonial concepts explored are useful for understanding what constitutes postcolonial trauma in the created plays - *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless Walk*. The meanings encountered in the explored texts reiterate the plight of those in the imagined nation as those with the periphery mentality, a notion that highlights the traumatic conditions within the imagined nation. This Chapter has also explored how literary and socio-political sources stimulated playmaking, touching on how emotive notions are equated with traumatic conditions reflected in the created plays.

It is also important to note that the themes related in this Chapter are useful for understanding how this research generates new knowledge. Equally important is

the need to rethink and negotiate alternative ways of engaging praxis. This shows that praxis is engaged in different ways for the benefit of those in the imagined nation and diaspora, especially as indicated in the Alternative plays created. Finally, the juxtaposition of the created plays with a typical African Folktale is an opportunity to show the epistemological essence of the Afrocentric perspective - reflected as a 'paradigm of thought and agenda for emancipation that centres on African people, history, and culture' (Ansell, 2013: 6). Finally, the emerging themes are useful for understanding how aspects of the research are interrelated. For example, the texts explored are related to some of the key concepts in postcolonialism explored which reveal meanings in them; all related and relevant for bringing knowledge to the Academy

Praxis Window 6

Excerpts from praxis and indicative of stimulus

Play 1	**First Woman:** Suddenly, the village is almost empty and people are seeing them in the city doing all sort of menial jobs to survive. Some will never come back home as a result of the shame and slur. **The Chief:** Some of my sons have also gone. Many of our capable young men are gone. **First Man:** What is annoying is the account that many bring back to the community. They say that the long snake is carting rubber, cocoa, palm kernel, to feed the ships waiting by the coast. You would have thought that we should be rich by now. Unfortunately, we are not. Instead, we are suffering with hands stretched; like beggars waiting beside a big refuse bin, waiting for coins to be dropped. For how long shall we depend on others across the sea to help us when we are the ones helping them? Why should we ask for help and why should that be the bane of our lives? Why should we feed on the leftover when the source of the wealth is right behind our yards? We have waited for too long and time does not seem to be bringing us good tidings. Who knows, if we have spent all our time to honestly look within, we would have achieved more. I can imagine the Eye of the future saying: Your waiting period is over; your friends who give you a piece at a time have hatched a plan. They have decided to increase the size of the refuse bin. You will now live inside the bin. What? Live inside the bin? (As one looked carefully at the end of the wall, a large banner is draped down spelling the name of another great power, CHINA taking control of Africa). **All:** Haaa – another pain.	**Progression of Praxis** I am writing this latter part of the play and reflecting more on the Centre-Periphery concept reflected in the first Chapter and related to the circles. • The centre may be seen as a metaphor indicating the rights of the people, a place for cultural fulfilment, development and achievement. • The centre is also a focal point for connecting with identity notions. • Reflecting on the notion of 'colonial mentality.' See: Monteiro-Ferreira, (2014: 61-62)
Play 2	**1st Man:** Yes. Just like that. Back to reality. Before a handful of us got to the sea side, our clothing had been battered by the bad conditions and inclement weather. Strange behaviours set in. We could hardly understand one another… That is where we handed all that was left of our monies to an agent of some sort who promised to arrange a raft that would take us across to Europe. Only few of us survived to greet each other at the camp in Spain. After recovery, we were huddled into a court where we were ordered to be sent back to our countries of origin. **2nd Man:** Thanks for the story; I will embark on the journey. **1st Man:** You will? **Unknown Voice:** If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing? **The End**	At this point, I am writing the plays and taking a panoramic view at all the initial Chapters and the meanings that stimulated different aspects of the written plays.
The Alternative plays	The Alternative plays are a means of further experimentation with ideas that are similar to those expressed in the main plays. Juxtaposed with the first and second plays, the Alternative plays are more flexible and not conventional.	Note: The Alternative plays draw from the trauma based notions reflected in the main plays.

Chapter Six

Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Summation of Findings

This final Chapter is the summation of my findings as a playwright embarking on a practice-led research. This Chapter also articulates the strands of knowledge I am bringing into the Academy. I have learnt much through the practice-based research, described as the combination of my experiences of traditional folktales, performances and western education. My experiences are also partly postcolonial because of the influence of postcolonial literatures that I read growing up in Africa. Also, my experience about Postcolonial trauma has enabled me to develop a playwriting pathway that is blossoming into a trauma-based voice, as seen in the plays I wrote in this research. Moreover, I have come to appreciate my playwriting experience in a new light, knowing that the practice-led research which has been a useful tool for knowing about postcolonial trauma and useful for knowing about other subjects and writing plays around them.

Another finding which is equally useful to bring to the Academy is that my research may be described as a conscious journey through three frames being, the pre-colonial frame, the colonialist frame and the postcolonial frame. The three frames are useful for development trauma-based plays that are useful for future generations in Africa and the diaspora. It is important to mention that these frames have been accessed through exploring textual sources and writing plays in this research. Within that context, this research has also helped me to reflect on my Africa world-view. This is the idea of bringing the Esan worldview through the injection of ideas that are common in Esan worldview into my playwriting experience in this research. Thus, the fragments of the traditional perspectives included have helped to enrich my playwriting experience and the development of my ability as a playwright to appreciate happenings in my part of Africa. Moreover,

the meanings in Esan Folktale experience are useful for understanding postcolonial trauma from the point of view of the experiences of the characters in the plays I wrote in this research. In the course of writing the plays in this research, I have come to appreciate the embedded meanings in typical Esan words (in Esan folktale) as a driving force for knowing about trauma. Words like, emuata (truth) esi (good) and evil (obe) are useful for appreciating how individuals and collectives relate to issues around them. It is important to mention that the interventive focus of the Alternative plays may be seen in the context of esi or good traits, especially when linked with the interventive focus of African folktales, (relating to *Abayole*, Appendix 3) which have didactic or moralistic elements.

I have come to understand that the worldviews the explored sources have useful implications. This is because they are linked in the sense of the needs of the collectives for development, seen in the context of the Alternative plays I wrote in this research. Moreover, the suggested direct involvement of the collectives in the Alternative plays is a call for change and development. I am also finding out through meanings associated with dependency in the written plays in this research that the collectives can do more for their communities as reflected by notions in the imagined nation rather than look to foreign nations for survival. Moreover, the play within the play in *The Endless Walk* suggests the need for additional interrogation of issues so that situations in my part of Africa and the diaspora may be effectively covered.

6.2 Reflecting on my postcolonial trauma

This may be useful in the Academy for future playwrights who may want to embark on a similar pathway. Growing up in Nigeria, I have had experiences which now remind me of the coming of colonialists to my part of Africa, especially when juxtaposed with meanings associated with centre-periphery concept, or notions of dependency. At school in Calabar and Esan, English was encouraged

and vernacular, being the native Esan language was discouraged. But at home, parents insisted that we speak Esan. The play *The Longest Snake* reminds me of the various trips I have taken by rail and the frustrating experiences of having to travel for many days instead of a day or two. This corroborates the imageries or motifs of postcolonial trauma reflected in the explored texts and the plays I wrote during the course of this research. Within a practice-led frame, I find that the centre-periphery frame is relevant for understanding postcolonial trauma from the lens of those in the centre and the collectives in the periphery. I am also able to identify with the motifs of trauma in *The Endless walk*, based on some of the testimonies of fellow Nigerians who have experienced such illegal trips corroborated in the notes in Appendix 2.

It should be highlighted that my perception at this moment is partly African, (being an Esan) and western, having been educated in a western institution in Africa and England. I would categorically affirm that despite my dual perception, I do not feel any sense of loss, contrary to notions expressed in the explored sources and the created plays. Although I may have my personal struggles with adjusting to some inconsistencies or meanings that run contrary to my African cultural positions, I do intend, like Achebe, to use the English language in my writing. Moreover, like Achebe, I have also been given the language and I intend to use it as best as I can (Achebe, 1975, cited in Ngugi, 1988: 7).

That is why my plays are mostly written in English because my exposure and knowledge of my native language is minimal. That also explains why the Esan Folktale included in this thesis (see Appendix 3) is transcribed from Esan to English which is partly relevant for understanding the centre-periphery playwriting framework. I have in other occasions written plays in Nigerian Pidgin English; though no sample has been included in this research. Writing in pidgin-English, like writing Alternative plays in this research reflects the dynamics of being more

interventive through making drama accessible to many folks who may not have access to the theatre. Moreover, in the drive towards the interventive theatre focus in this research, writing in Pidgin English maybe considered a right step in the right direction although many would argue against it, saying that it may likely not advance knowledge mostly dispensed in English. However, there are existing pidgin plays that are not trauma-based as demonstrated in this research. Whilst I will like to consider the flexibility that the writing of Alternative plays bring to the academy, I will like to consider the essence of the trauma-based plays to people in Africa and the diaspora. I do not feel disadvantaged in anyway but I do relate with the written and anecdotal testimonies or experiences of other Africans explored in this research.

6.3 A Diagrammatic reflection of my research focus

In concluding, this research also gives me the opportunity to introduce not only my Esan folktale perspective to the Academy, as well as the essence of the motifs in the folktales which are similar with those in the explored sources and the created plays. Through the diagram and my experience of participating in folktale events, I have also earnt that folktale characters encounter problems that may be understood from the centre-periphery point of view; which may be similar to those experienced by characters in the explored sources and the created plays. It is relevant to mention that I have also learnt through inferring on the explored sources and the created plays that the worldview reflected in the Folktale medium, the explored postcolonial texts and the created plays in this research are similar, and I have drawn meanings from them in the process of praxis. This reflects a close-knit worldview where characters, settings, situations and even conditions that create room for trauma are similar. Although all the traditional elements in the Folktale medium and the explored texts are not represented in the created plays, their similarity may further be understood in this diagram:

Figure 6.1.

Esan Folktales	**The explored postcolonial texts**	**The Created Plays in this Research**
The folktales have a narrative structure, reflecting beginning, middle and end.	The explored postcolonial texts are similar to the folktale narrative structure because they also have a beginning, middle and end.	The created plays have similar narrative structure like the folktales; apart from the Alternative plays that are expected to be unconventional.
The folktales in my part of Africa have motifs.	The explored postcolonial texts contain implicit trauma motifs which are linked to negative colonialist activities in my part of Africa.	The created plays are informed by the implicit motifs in the explored postcolonial sources.
There are didactic notions in Esan folktales.	There are also didactic notions in the explored postcolonial texts.	The created plays contain didactic elements leading to suggestions of change and development.
The folktales contain emotive notions leading to pathos.	The explored texts also contain emotive notions which are linked with the negative activities of the colonialists.	The created plays also have emotive notions which are linked to the conditions of the characters moving from a familiar terrain to an unfamiliar terrain.
The characters in the folktales are everyday sort of people. However, there are other characters domiciled in the Animal and Spirit worlds.	The explored postcolonial texts have personalities that may be classed as individuals and collectives as seen in the primary texts explored in the second Chapter.	The characters in the created plays are mostly drawn from the collectives in the imagined nation.
The contexts of the folktales are mostly African. However, there are notions of the spirit and animal worlds.	The contexts of the explored texts are mostly cultural and political – touching on the coming of the colonialists.	The contexts of the created plays are African – touching on the political, economic and social nuances.
The settings are mostly rural; although the setting in *ABAYOLE*, (Appendix 3) moves to the spirit world.	The settings in the explored texts are mostly urban and traditional African settings.	The settings of *The Longest Snake* is rural and Urban; although the setting of *The Endless Walk* moves to the Sahara Desert and the banks of The Mediterranean ocean
The meanings reiterated in the folktales are reflected mostly as GOOD and EVIL.	The meanings reiterated in the explored texts reflected mostly as CAUSES and EFFECT.	The meanings reiterated in the created plays are mostly in the context of CHANGE and DEVELOPMENT.

As part of the knowledge I am bringing into the Academy, I have learnt that the above diagram is a summative representation of my research focus. The diagram, as a breakdown of the research process suggests a connected worldview between the folktale medium, the explored sources and the plays I created in this research. Moreover, the connected worldview authenticates the relevance of appreciating the stimulus drawn, that makes the created plays a reality. The connection is also indicative of the need for me as a playwright, to continuously focus on and use the African psychological paradigm as a tabula-rasa for creating plays, instead of focussing on the western epistemology which maybe synonymous with dependency as suggested by the exegesis.

6.4 Reflecting on the essence of the alternative plays

In this research, I have found out that the Alternative plays may be conceptually repositioned as the nation the characters in the created plays never had. I have reflected on the notion that the Alternative plays would likely give the folks in the periphery and the imagined nation something or various ideas to look up to in the process of working towards development and change. The meaning inferred may be perceived in the following notion; if they had a good nation, they would not be compelled to depend on others. It would also be seen that the Alternative plays are useful to me as a playwright to further understand postcolonial trauma in the sense of the flexibility that praxis presents in that creative pathway.

I have also learnt that the Alternative plays are linked to the freedom of the collectives in the imagined nation, helping me as a playwright to understand how the periphery needs to be redeemed or changed. The modus of the presentation of trauma may also be associated with the freedom to define or engage change and development in the periphery. I have also learnt that, the interventive focus of the created plays is linked to the change and development anticipated in the periphery and the imagined nation. Within this context, I have also learnt that the Alternative plays are more interventive than *The Longest Snake* and *The Endless*

Walk because of their structure, style and anticipated maenings. Furthermore, I am finding that the Alternative plays represent a medium that may be effectively used to engage the lingering condition presented by postcolonial trauma. It would be necessary to mention that the lingering condition of trauma has been previously mentioned and may also be perceived as a reason for the playmaking effort in this research. It would also be seen that, although the characters long for change, they are inadvertently trapped in painful conditions which the message in the created plays may release them from. However, in writing the Alternative plays, a ray of hope is further unlocked for the collectives.

6.5 The lingering pain and the broken imagined nation

In the created plays within this research, I have found out that the following terms from the titles 'Longest' and 'Endless' maybe associated with the lingering effect of trauma. The adjectives connote a continuous process that reflects presumed conditions of suffering and pain that deserve intervention. It is within this context that the role of the traditional society may be understood. Thus, the traditional society seems to be watching while the pain lingers. Therefore, the use of some folktale element may be seen as an invitation to the traditional society; thus, strengthening the will of identity. I have also identified the idea that the lingering pain may not always be blamed on agents of colonialism or neo-colonialism. This is because nothing is indicated as the reason why the collectives could not muster strength to fight back. This is tied to the will to control the centre; a notion probably resolved with the plays which have embedded meanings that are useful for inspiring change in the prospective reader or audience.

In the course of this research, I have continued to gain confidence using the centre-periphery concept for the purpose of conceptualisation. This is in the sense of using it as a model for creating the plays. The overall essence and what I am learning from the centre-periphery concept is the idea of using it as a template for writing and understanding postcolonial trauma. For example, it is suggested that

plays within Africa and the diaspora may be judged by the centre-periphery playwriting concept, seen as part of the knowledge being brought to the Academy. Moreover, I have discovered the need to continue with this playwriting framework for my playwriting exercises.

6.6 What was achieved in the main Chapters?

It is important to mention that apart from drawing meanings related to postcolonial trauma from various sources explored, I have also reflected on meanings that explain and reinforce postcolonial trauma in the testimonies reflected in the literatures explored, considered as 'sites of witness' as reflected in other parts of this research (Duggan, 2012). Moreover, the meanings reflected in the created plays demonstrate how individuals and collectives respond to trauma associated with colonialism many years after Nigeria's independence from western nations. It also important to mention that the plays I have written during the course of this research are not only useful in my part of Africa, but useful for explaining issues associated with Africans in the diaspora. Therefore, the notions reflected in this research are not only useful for explaining notions within my part of Africa or Nigeria specifically.

The practice-led research method adopted afforded me the opportunity to create the new plays by juggling various notions simultaneously; meaning that I had to read, write and explore various concepts, theories, texts and narratives (see the second Chapter). This experience was useful in the sense that the contexts, settings, language and the characters created in the new plays are linked to the exegesis and useful for defining meanings associated with postcolonial trauma. Also, the feelings, experiences and the conditions that define the characters in the created plays are linked to meanings deduced from notions highlighted in the first two Chapters. Also, it would be important for the reader to understand the interpretative role of the African nuances articulated in the created plays.

It would be necessary to mention that the process of balancing playwriting and the analytical process was daunting in this research. This is likened to walking on a tight rope; but the stimulation of new thoughts derived from encountering new ideas was an encouraging driving force for me. It is reassuring to know that the outcome of the stimulating process are the created plays which will be shared with others within and outside the Academy, seen as evidence of knowledge and experience gained through this practice-led research. Also, this mode of research has given me the opportunity to appreciate the essence of combining praxis with exegesis through making use of trauma elements from different sources. This is indicative of the usefulness of the practice-led research method for exploring and creating simultaneously. The exploratory process meant that I had to examine various areas and sources which I would not have engaged with (in a typical playwriting process) if I had not undertaken this practice-led research approach.

I have also come to appreciate this research as a continuum to the discussion on decolonisation; supporting the idea that this research is useful for offering suggestions on how trauma-based issues within specific regions in Africa are explained or understood through trauma-based praxis. In that sense, the anticipated outcomes of this research would be an opportunity to reflect on experiences associated with the lingering underdevelopment and painful situations in the continent and the diaspora, touching on notions related to identity and self-realisation inferred from some of the explored sources. This research is therefore, an opening to finding solutions through new plays which may lead to reconciliation in various communities in Nigeria and in the diaspora. Equally relevant are discourses relating to the tacking of terrorism as reflected in O'Connor's reflections on '*Drama as critical pedagogy for re-imagining terrorism'* (2013: 125). Such important functions show how texts and contexts explored are useful, or how praxis would be directed in this research, perceived as, 'engaging the memory of

trauma and sculpting meanings in the postcolonial present,' borrowing Achebe's wisdom (1975: 44).

In creating plays within a circle, I have envisaged numerous possibilities with the centre-Periphery concept (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2013, 43). This is in the sense of reflecting on performances in my part of Africa where meanings are anecdotally believed to be initiated from the centre of a circle (Ese in Esan tradition). It is such a notion that I have captured in praxis and extended to the Alternative plays I created. I have also envisioned the possibility of filtering meanings related to the centre and periphery through the lens of social action, touching on possibilities that reinforce meanings in the plays created in this research. So in this research, the centre of the circle is reflected as a melting pot where metaphors are brewed through deliberate exploration of ideas, contexts, and concepts. Through my experimentation with the created plays, I have come to appreciate the creative instinct from the creators of African folktales with their distinctive imagination similar to socio-dramatic elements which may be perceived in *ABAYOLE*, an Esan Folktale (see Appendix 3). I have also drawn confidence from engaging Afrocentric notions, touching on nuances in African folktales and folklore, of which the centre and periphery are prime elements.

Through this research, I have come to understand that exegesis and praxis) within the centre-periphery context) represent strength, while the periphery represents the pain of being deprived of opportunities, reiterating the oppression seen in the context of the like, 'marginal' by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2013, 43). So, the plays created show how people in the imagined nation could be empowered to move away from the periphery towards the centre; signifying empowerment. The centre also represents a place where problems may be resolved, as reflected in the notion of ESE, (the circle in Esan) a place where folktale performances take place. The centre may also be interpreted as a knowledge zone prepared for helping those deprived of opportunities in the periphery. Where the centre

represents power, the created plays may reflect how those in the centre may be encouraged to move to the periphery to effect change; meaning that the poor and unemployed may find hope, having been presumably deprived of advantages perceived in the explored texts. Where the centre contains all representations of knowledge, the created plays may reflect how those in the centre should be encouraged to share knowledge with those in the periphery. Where the periphery represents youths with terrorist tendencies, the created plays may represent the feelings of the affected and how resolutions might be achieved. Where the core represents the seat of empowerment, the created plays may reflect how abused children and women could access help from the centre. I have also reflected on how the created plays may show how deprived youths could learn how to work with the government in the centre (to get support or get integrated) instead of resorting to immigrations. Where the centre represents Europe and the periphery represents Africa, plays should be created to reiterate and reverse current knowledge towards understanding or resolving crises related to oppression and identity.

In engaging praxis or creating plays, I am aware of sources that point to colonialist and neo-colonialist activities in Africa. This suggests that the exegesis recognises that incidents following 'The scramble for Africa' (Dodds, 2014: 181, Pakenham, 1991) by western nations precipitated the actions and reactions by individuals and collectives reflected in postcolonial trauma sources. Equally relevant are the traumatic notions embedded in the literary and non-literary texts explored, in which ethnic groups were merged into forced communities or nations who had nothing in common; occasioning the 'divide and rule' colonialist policy (Falola, T. and Oyeniyi, B.A. 2015: 313) (Kemp, T. 2014: 177). In creating trauma-informed plays, I am also aware of the disadvantages suffered by Africans as a result of imperialist actions which corroborate trauma motifs in the created plays, echoing sad memories of subjugations, marginalisation, and

maladministration in the imagined nation; including the oppression of individuals and collectives. The exploration of such memories may be associated with the fields of witness (Duggan, 2012, 89), which also explains postcolonial trauma in this research. Through these explorations, I have come to agree strongly that such postcolonial sources reveal how colonialist and neo-colonialist intrusion negatively tainted Africa as a continent, of which the created plays are witness sites as reiterated by Duggan earlier. I also agree that what was tainted in Africa is a rich stock of pre-colonial past, whose fragments are evident in narratives explored in the Literature Review; showing that pre-colonial Africa had aesthetic values in oral tradition and diversity that were hardly understood by the colonialists. It is the outcome of the trauma following the lack of understanding and oppression of the colonialists that are encapsulated in words and meanings that inform the plays I created in this research.

In this research, the exegesis suggests that individuals and collectives, (as viewed from a pre-colonial African lens) lived in nations that succumbed to conquering nations with superior weapons. The imperialist conquerors forcefully imposed traits and cultures that kept whole nations subjugated; revealing 'refracted identities' bent outwards to embrace the oppressors' whims and ways (Pearce, 2017: 54). It is therefore the reaction to the loss of identities and dependency (encapsulated in explored postcolonial sources) that is the subject of the exegesis and the plays I created in this research.

This study also suggests that the trauma of colonialism still hurts and haunts as reflected in the postcolonial sources explored (see: *TFA* and *DKH*). Such postcolonial sources, apart from revealing the centre-periphery concept revealed earlier, also touched on dependency, imperialism, and others mentioned by Gilbert and Tompkins, associated with postcolonial drama 'markers' (2002: 11). These markers are perceived (in the context of the created plays) as 'acts that interrogate the hegemony that underlines imperial representation' (2002: 11). This

is a continuation of the 'colonialist or decolonisation discourse' reflected in Ngugi's Decolonisation of the Mind (1988) and other key postcolonial texts explored.

In 'interrogating the hegemony that underlines imperial representations' (2002: 11) the created plays highlight similar trauma notions reflected by Sajnani and Johnson (Trauma-informed Drama Therapy, 2014), although the created plays are not highlighted as therapeutic. The created plays are considered as 'interventionist' or useful for 'conflict resolution' within similar contexts highlighted by Bisschoff and Van De Peer (Art and Trauma in Africa, 2013: 34). This is because of the needs that have arisen as a result of the negative impact of colonialist activities on individuals and collectives in Africa. It is anticipated that the trauma-informed plays I created in this research are useful for addressing such negative impacts; but they needed to be researched to be discovered and engaged as done in this reserach.

In addressing trauma, the practice-led approach of investigation has been a useful lens for understanding and interpreting notions critically and creatively (Barrett and Bolt, 2010: 1-13). Such critical and creative processes are useful for knowing and understanding 'colonialist induced trauma' (Ifowodo, 2013: 132) associated with Ndlovu-Gatsheni's notion of the 'Coloniality of being' (2013: 133) reflected by Ndlovu-Gatsheni as, 'not only the depersonalisation of black people under colonialism but the constitution of Africans as racialized subjects with next to no value placed on their lives' (2013: 133). This may be discerned in words and activities of the individual characters and collectives in the created plays.

I have also discovered that the idea of 'doing' perceived in this research, is associated with the creative instinct, which is also associated with playmaking in this instance. In that context, this practice-led investigation (focussed on exploring and creating trauma-based postcolonial plays) are understood from Barrett and

Bolt's reference to Richard Dawkins' 'concept of the meme' (2010: 1) reflecting 'replication' and Heidegger's idea of 'handlability' (2010: 1) which demonstrates that 'knowledge is derived from doing and from the senses' (2010: 1), being a notion that helped me to stay focussed through the creative process in this research.

Also, this research is associated with the work of 'contemporary practitioners in the creative arts' (Smith and Dean, 2009: 1) who believe that artistic practice in playmaking or playwriting is perceived as a form of research described as: 'a new species of research, generative enquiry that draws on subjective, interdisciplinary and emergent methodologies that have the potential to extend the frontiers of research' (Barrett and Bolt, 2010: 1) which I strongly agree with because the exegesis is useful for me as a playwright of gaining stimulus, for creating new plays and knowing about postcolonial trauma.

6.7 The priming of praxis

Within the context of the priming of praxis in this research, I have learnt that praxis is mostly creative and reflective, as demonstrated within the practice-led methodology. The process of reflecting through the exegesis and then activating praxis would not have been possible outside the practice-led research ambit for me. This is an attestation to the usefulness of the practice-led method for acquiring knowledge whilst creating plays. It is also important to note that it is beneficial for the exegesis to be in motion simultaneously with praxis, reflecting a necessary symbiotic relationship. This relationship means that the connotations embedded in specific words of notions directed the course of the search, which subsequently benefitted praxis. Also, engaging notions like African Epistemology saw me borrowing from the narrative form embedded in African folktales and some nuances related to the African worldview. What this connotes is that rather than follow a strict Eurocentric paradigm, I related more with the African

epistemological perspective, touching on the explored sources and the folktale medium. I also thought about the need to reach an Africa and diasporan audience with new plays cast in Eurocentric paradigms to support Afrocentric notions. Equally useful was the flexibility that conceptualisation offered, revealing how postcolonial trauma notions could be managed in praxis. So generally, praxis depended on notions reflected by the exegesis which were conceptualised; leading to outcomes of new plays attuned with social development.

6.8 The Circle, the Centre-Periphery concept and the Interventive focus of praxis as contribution to knowledge

The 'circle' stands out for me as a model in search of stimulus as generally inferred from the articulation of ideas within the context of the circle. Also, the 'centre-periphery concept' may be presented in this playwriting context as a template for writing or analysing similar plays within the same ideological contexts. Moreover, in the course of this research, I did not identify any play within the context of the interventive and trauma focus of this research; showing another aspect of the contribution of knowledge to the Academy. This may be further explained thus: the importance of the fusion of exegesis and praxis is perceived as basis for knowing about postcolonial trauma. Then, there is the notion of the imagined nation, the periphery mentality, and the contents of the created plays reflecting meanings by which postcolonial trauma may be understood. Equally important is the possibility of being creatively stimulated through notions from explored sources which demonstrates the continuity of praxis. Such continuity suggests that it is possible to develop interventive socio-dramatic pathways. In other words, praxis was useful to me, and hopefully to the Academy as a tool for engaging discourses that are beneficial to individuals and collectives in Africa and the diaspora. This is through adopting a traditional framework through the use of elements in the folktale medium, thus, reflecting my African worldview as being creatively useful. This means that praxis based on apt exegesis is capable of

yielding elements suitable for interventions, considering the focus of praxis in this study. I have in this research used the interventive focus for reaching individuals and collectives; as well as for expressing their plights through the new plays. Praxis is therefore, focussed through socio-political development as well as cultural and pedagogical development. I have also used this research to suggest that there is the need to deliberately create plays that tackle postcolonial trauma from a socio-dramatic perspective touching on Fanon's opinion on 'Affect' (1986, 50-51) seen from the lens of the collectives in the imagined nation. The focus of discourse for the Academy is the outcome of this research, considered a tool for positively redirecting such traumatised mind-sets through the created plays.

6.9 How this research contributes to knowledge in other ways

I am convinced that the focus of praxis on drawing interventive images from folktales is a relevant framework for activating community development discourses relative to postcolonial trauma pathways. For example, the notion of the circle is being emphasised towards reflecting on the question: what does development connote? In the created plays, community development is understood in the context of frameworks (through directed circles) that move mind-sets towards engaging change dynamics. There is also the need to ask, 'whose drama is it?' This question reveals how drama should be consciously engaged for making positive things happen for the collectives in the periphery, who are in the exegesis believed to be far from the centre of change and development. So, in the pursuit of community development, praxis is being deployed for crafting new plays that mirror the familiar folktale style against the backdrop of community development. This is a useful redirection from neo-colonialist pathways where foreign ideologies compete with embedded traditional meanings, so that drama in my part of Africa would be 'accessible' and 'relevant' (Igweonu, and 2011: 30). The evolved voices through praxis may be perceived as resonating neo-pedagogical notions, entailing

learning from the familiar or knowing from self, touching on the mirroring effect of the folktale and the centre-periphery concept.

I would argue that the created plays are primed for structuring issues that would connect and develop communities; doing more than projecting elitist values associated with written play texts. I also expect that these new plays would empower, re-focus and energise communities in Africa, touching on their felt needs by encouraging the collectives to participate, as evident in the traditional folktale medium. Such created plays go beyond the primary expectations from folktales and Folktale performances, like narrating, singing, clapping, and chanting within a circle. The main focus is the reactivation of those components mentioned to include the main essence of bringing ideas into the circle for the collectives, and by the collectives in the communities. It is also expected that whatever is brought into the circle would be relevant in the present and the transgenerational future. Also, in creating these new plays, existing community theatres and socio-dramatic groups would benefit, and sustained praxis would mould realistic developmental pathways that are dramatically reachable to all.

The new plays and voices would also find place in the minds of the collectives and community play areas, as they would be perceived as new voices for interpreting African and African diasporan consciousness or awareness needs. So, this research is an opportunity to further engage in more exegesis and praxis focussed on studying roots of disaffection, development, decolonisation, racism, identity crisis - all linkable to postcolonial trauma. Within that context, there would be the enhancement of praxis focused on the dramatisation of trauma; a probable backdrop for nurturing reconciliation and countering terrorism. In the future, it is hoped that praxis should be developed to focus on therapeutic and pedagogical strands, touching more on the needs of the real collectives, not those in the imagined nation and the diaspora. Such notions like the 'periphery-mentality'

should be a resource base for realistically resolving issues in schools, prisons and the wider communities. Apart from this study revealing knowledge about postcolonial trauma through the exegesis and praxis, this research shows how the dramatisation of the 'centre' and 'periphery' concept presents the possibility of addressing notions of healing and reconciliation through praxis. This is because of the possible demystification of African stereotypes through decolonisation and development.

6.10 How this research stimulates further studies and praxis

I will like to conclude that this research reiterates the importance of exploring postcolonial trauma through a practice-led approach, drawing on symbolic representations like the imagined nation for conceptualisation. Although the imagined nation was an artificial creation, it is useful for understanding the collectives within the context of postcolonial trauma. It is anticipated that similar or future studies or discourses may engage the difference between the periphery and the centre, considering that the centre is an area of strength while the periphery is impoverished. Future studies may engage the uncertainties and weaknesses in the periphery as reflected by the issues demonstrated in the created plays. It would be essential to ascertain the origin and possible outcome of trauma notions in the imagined nation of Africa, and how the centre-periphery notions specifically affect individuals and groups of people. Within that context, it would be necessary to provide possible scientific instruments for measuring the extent of the wound within the regions perceived as the periphery. It is equally significant to develop praxis that is dramatically focussed on dialogues with specific victims of trauma. In that context, future studies may reflect on how it feels to eventually move from the periphery to the centre; also reflecting on the trauma of specific genders and how their pains should be ameliorated or eradicated within the periphery. In future, it would be necessary to go beyond the exploratory perspective, thus, investigating how trauma notions may be turned

into restorative tools. Also, more studies within the context of this research should engage postcolonial trauma as catalyst for filling gaps created by unidentified and marred identities, as well as providing differentiated plays that focus on healing and restoration.

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Appendix 1

Play - **The Longest Snake**

By Isi Agboaye

CHARACTERS

- The longest snake: (Metaphorically a train)
- The Chief
- The Town Crier
- First Person
- Second person
- The First Woman
- The Second Woman
- The First Official and the Second Official
- Woman
- The Eye of the future (The prophetic voice)
- Villagers
- Tuwa and Kai (Two village children)

INTRODUCTION

- This play reveals the reaction of some rural folks in my part of Africa to the coming of the longest snake in the land - a metaphor for the railway system.
- Incidentally, they were told that the coming of the longest snake would usher in prosperity to all in the community.
- Sooner or later, they discovered that the train was a conduit for sapping all their economic wealth through the coast to distant nations in Europe.
- Ultimately, their population is depleted as most of them drift to the cities for 'better life' through the longest snake – the Train.
- Tragedy struck when the Chief's son was killed in the city. In all these, it is apparent that the people refused to listen to the potent voice of the **Eye of the future** whom the Chief remembers at the end.

Scene One

(The Chief and the people dance and sing in anticipation of visitors coming to the village).

The Chief:
Dance, sing; enjoy this beautiful day. This is the beginning of great things that will come to our land. We are happy; this will bring our share of good things. We are happy to see this day. Our daylight shall never end.

NOTES:
Reflective notes for understanding postcolonial trauma.

- The Centre-periphery concept begins to reveal notions of trauma; especially when juxtaposed with information that are historically linked with Africa and colonialism reflected in texts explored in the Introduction and the Literature Review.
- The imagined nation is reflected – based on the notions explored in the first two Chapters of the Research.
- Reflecting on the notion of subservience – suggesting that if our forefathers were not subservient, they would not have been taken advantage of.
- Reflecting on the absence of cultural assertiveness, a painful notion that saw the colonialists taking control.
- Reflecting on the notion that the coming of the Railway, like the coming of the colonialists affected African cultural values?
- Should the collectives have rejected the train? Did they have the ability or the will to reject something of great value, especially in their estimation?

The Eye of the future (voice): Why should I spoil the joy of my brethren? What I am seeing is not really good I see men taking our land I hear many weeping and crying I see peace snatched from many hearts When this happens, you must do something Put yourself together as one Move together as one **First Person:** What is he talking about? Has he ever spoken anything to console and comfort anyone? It's always doom, doom and doom. **The Chief:** We have been waiting for many years for this glorious day and we believe we will be greater than our forefather's. How can you bring this sort of scary news? **Second person:** You cannot turn our joy into sadness. Look again at the eyes of the gods and see if they have scraps of goodness for us. These officials are special. They are sent by the Crown. How can they mean evil? **First person:** This is exactly what we have hoped for many years. We are coming closer and closer to development. (The people scream for joy and continue to celebrate). **The Eye of the future (voice):** What the eyes sees, The eyes must convey to the mouth The mouth must say it And the conscience will be free. I see men taking our land I hear many weeping and crying I see peace snatched from many hearts When this happens, you must do something Put yourself together as one Move together as one **The Chief:** Let the celebration continue. We have been here for too long to be afraid of problems. When problem sees courage, problems will run away. We do not mean to look down on your prophesy. You have always been a great one in this land; but we must wait patiently for the coming of the great ones as they bring development and prosperity to our land. **First person:** They are coming. (The music increases in tempo as the people sing and dance. Contrary to their expectation, the officials blow the whistle and begin to push the people violently. The people run about in disarray). **First Official:**	• Note that the expectation of the people, represented by the Chief is different from that of the Colonialists who brought the train. • Trauma notions are identified as the Africans begin to see the Railway differently after the initial excitement. • Reflecting on the notion that urban drift brought pain to Africans. • There is the notion of abandonment – which symbolises pain. • Moving or drifting to urban areas suggests leaving the goodness of the rural area that the collectives have hitherto being used to. **The Eye of the future** is a prophetic entity that is construed as the voice of conscience or wisdom. This is a phenomenon that is anecdotally evident in African folklore and folktales. This is synonymous with the importance of African epistemologies in this Research. • Reflecting on the train as a curse, suggesting trauma. • The curse here suggests something that brings bad omen to the people. Relate this to the coming of the white men in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart.* • The notion that things fell apart, is anecdotally a bad omen and equally painful. • Reflecting on THE EYE OF THE

We have no time to waste. We will cut off all the trees in that direction. (The people run about in confusion). **Second Official:** We know what we are doing and we serve the Crown of England. You cannot stop us from our task or we shall summon you all to court. **First Person:** The thing has happened. Mama Idukpon, they said that they will cut off all your colanut trees. We are finished. **First Official:** Tell the men to begin to cut the trees. **First Person:** Call everybody. Let's fall on the floor and plead with the head man. **First Official:** You could call everybody or call nobody; we must do what we have to do. We have passed through all the creeks and corners of other villages; they understand the language that we speak. **Woman:** (Holds the leg of the first official begging and crying) Save me, please save me; those trees have lasted for ages. They provide Kolanuts for my trade. Help us; help us. There will be nothing to feed the children. **First Person:** Call the Chief. They are taking the whole land. **First Official:** (Looking through the equipment of the Surveyor and shaking his head). Hmm, all the trees and all the houses must go. **First Person:** Call the Chief. You cannot do this to us. **Second Official:** Once again, we know what we are doing and we serve the Crown of England. You cannot stop us from our task or we shall summon you all to court. (The Chief arrives as the villagers bow and greet him whilst the Officials are still defiant) **The Chief:** Bring the finest palmwine for it is the dry season and the men must be tired from their long journey. Sing a lovely tune that will remind them of goodness and joy. **First Official:** Thanks Chief, you speak the language that brings joy and	FUTURE and the pain of not listening to the EYE OF THE FUTURE. • Reflecting on the cultural relevance of traditional institutions. • Anecdotally, celebrations are common occurrences in Africa to mark important events. • Reflecting on the importance of economic trees; anecdotally believed to be the mainstay or backbone of the collective's wealth. • The collective are in disarray because they could not defend themselves. The same conditions are reflected in the two main texts explored: Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*. In both texts, the individuals and collectives are affected by the actions of the colonialists. • The term, '**We are finished'** signifies a state of devastation, loss and deep pain in the individual, the whole community, nation or collective. **Inferring trauma from the following:**

peace to the heart. This is the sort of language we want to hear.

The Chief:
Serve the drink and let the women begin to cook the finest foods. (The officials begin to drink and laugh).

First Official:
With due respect to your highness, this equipment sometimes sees things differently when you speak to it differently.

The Chief:
What is it seeing now?

First Officer:
(The officer comically swings the equipment to different areas and he gets to a particular area, the people scream and wail and when it passes, the people rejoice). I think we will avoid this village and do only a little damage to a few houses and trees.

The Chief:
Give them some more of the finest wines.

The Second Officer:
But the Chief must say something to our pockets. We have shown great favour to this village. As for the next few villages, they will encounter our wrath if they do not speak the language that we understand.

(The Chief puts his hand in his pocket and gives a large sum of money to one of the officials)

Second Officer:
That is the language we understand. Listen, the engineers are coming.

(A couple of people are seen laying the tracks to the sound of the locomotive)

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

Second Officer:
That's it; pass through the back of the village and avoid as many trees as possible for the language he spoke into our pockets makes so much sense to our eyes. When we finish laying the tracks, we will come around and drink the finest palmwine in this village. We have never seen hospitality as displayed in these parts today. This is how it should be and nobody should moan.

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

- Reflecting on our forefathers who could have been subservient; leading to being taken advantage of.
- Reflecting on the notion of cultural assertiveness. If our forefathers were assertive, they would not have collaborated with the colonialists.
- On another hand, reflecting on the trauma surrounding those who fought back but were subdued – considering notions in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman.*
- The term LANGUAGE stands for bribery.
- How could the Chief have understood the language of the Officials while the people did not understand the language reflected as bribery?

Reflecting on Aspects of the Literature Review:

Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **First Official:** There is power and there is power. This Chief is a man of great understanding. You are different from all the Chiefs around. This is the sort of Chief that I respect. Thanks for knowing what is good. This hand rubs this hand and they become clean. Is that not the way that we should all live? **All:** Yes. You are right. **Second Official:** He knows exactly how things are done. **First Official:** Not like the other Chiefs who would like to assert their rights. **Second Official:** They burn their whiskers in ignorance. **The Longest Snake:** Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **First Official:** Let's go to the next village. **The Eye of the future (voice):** Why should I spoil the joy of my brethren? What I am seeing is not really good I see men taking our land I hear many weeping and crying I see peace snatched from many hearts When this happens, you must do something Put yourself together as one Move together as one (The officials laugh and exit).	• The pain that persists as a result of denial and neglect. • Pain in the process of seeking for relevance. • The pain associated with the fear of being dominated. • The pain that emanates due to the fear of everlasting loss. • The pain that is associated with fear of domination and entanglement with foreign notions. • Reflecting on the measure of fear and pain in the hearts of the people.
Scene Two (Two women on the way from the market with their wares	**The Train and African traditional nuances.** • Reflecting on the notion of GIFTS and

balanced on their heads) **The Longest Snake:** Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **First Woman:** Watch my sister; do not run into the longest snake and die. **Second Woman:** Thanks for warning me. **First Woman:** You know I am hard of hearing; but I can at least hear it loud and clear. **Second Woman:** Only God knows what they are up to this time. They promised the Chief that they would not do damage to the trees, yet they cut down nearly all the trees in the village. **1st Person:** That was two seasons ago. Did the Chief not put something in their pockets? **2nd Person:** The rumour is that one of the men wanted everything for himself. So he lied to other men and gave them tiny bits and pieces. **First Woman:** Where did you get this information? **Second Woman:** They were quarrelling all the way to the next village when someone eavesdropped. **First Woman:** So, in the midst of Chuc chak Chu chak, Chuc chak Chuc chak, they were busy fighting and sharing money. **Second Woman:** You should have seen how one of them looked at me. **First Woman:** You mean they wanted you also? **Second Woman:** If I had shown a sign of approval, he would have been singing a different song that night, not Chuc chak Chu chak Chuc chak Chuc chak. (They laugh) **First Woman:** Watch, it's coming again.	bribes. • Reflecting on the notion of the painful journey on the train, as synonymous to living under an oppressive system and travelling through the various communities to hear stories of woe. • Reflecting on the Chief; showing how the chief controls the ordinary people. The Chief is being controlled by the colonialists through the Officials. • Meanwhile, the core-periphery concept is at play here as the core signifies the colonialists and the periphery shows where the collectives are located. They are not allowed to be in the centre; the place that matters; the place where all decisions are taken. This is linked to anticipated transgenerational frustrations and pain. Reflect on the conflict between the Chief and the government officials. Who is in charge?

The Longest Snake: Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **Second Woman:** Wonders will never end. **First Woman:** Why does the track run through all the streets and all the villages and hamlets? **Second Woman:** That is a big question only the Chiefs and the elders can answer. It is said that the Crown does whatever the Crown wills and the Officials do whatever they like. So between the Crown and the Officials, you can never hear the truth. **The Eye of the future (voice):** I hear many weeping and crying I see peace snatched from many hearts When this happens, you must do something Put yourself together as one Move together as one **First Woman:** That was the eye of the future speaking to my heart. **Second Woman:** It was also speaking to my heart. **First Woman:** Do we ever listen? **Second Woman:** The land is totally divided. Different folks have their agenda and projects. As we speak, there are many who are busy finding ways and means of working with Chuc chak chuc chak. **First Woman:** What do you expect them to do? If they took their means of livelihood, what else is left for them? **Second Woman:** Even women. **First Woman:** I did not hear you.	• Reflecting the collective pain. • Reflecting on the pain in the loss of identity and the loss of cultural pride. • Reflecting on fear as outcome of oppression. • Explore fear as a potential area of trauma.
Second Woman: Women whose trades were destroyed as a result of the train lines have now moved to big cities. **First Woman:** Doing what?	**Reflecting on what constitutes true independence?** • Reflecting on the notion of bribery and corruption.

Second Woman:
Doing what some women do with men to survive hard times. Some married women apologised to their husbands and left them in the middle of the night saying that they could not bear to see the family suffer. Some people saw them wearing pairs of trousers and dancing like drunken antelopes and holding bottles of beer.

First Woman:
Abomination. Watch carefully, it's coming again.

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

Second Woman:
Please God take us home safely home; do not let our eyes encounter evil. I will rather stay in my husband's house and make do with the little we have rather than fall victim of the recent move to the city.

First Woman:
We would stick it out and see the end of this. We will survive.

(They exit).

Scene Three

(Two friends narrate the tale of their experience with the longest train. What is more enigmatic are the bottlenecks surrounding the process of boarding and travelling in the train)

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

First Person:
The train is coming into the station. What a brilliant work of man. Where is the tail of the snake?

Second Person:
Monka said that he spent nearly an hour looking for the tail of the snake. I thought he was telling a lie?

First Person:
Let's go to the front.

- What happens when the whole society is built on corruption? Playing on neglect, poverty and economic stagnation.
- The pain of corruption.
- Reflecting on the concept of **dependency**. When will we learn to stand on our own?

Reflecting on the plight of ordinary folks in the imagined nation and the pain they face daily within the periphery.

- Reflecting on the pain of being in the periphery.

Second Person:
Let's go to the back.

First Person:
Let's go to the front.

Second Person:
Let's go to the back.

First Person:
Let's talk to somebody.

Second Person:
The strange people have created this whole lot for themselves and not for us. Otherwise, why should it be so difficult to hold your ticket and still be running around the big thing like a fool? Abony travelled in this same snake a few days ago and came to the village to tell everyone that your ticket does not guarantee you a seat on the train. You have to know someone that knows someone that knows someone that knows someone.

First Person:
To think that we had to run round and round the contraption for ages without figuring how to get inside and take a seat.

Second Person:
If we were not bent on taking this trip, I would have suggested that we go home.

First Person:
Wonders will never end. Monka said he spent about an hour looking at all the metals in the world; rolling and turning – rolling and turning into all sorts of directions in one big thing. He said that it began belching smoke from the head; that is exactly what we are looking at. The Chief must welcome this to the palace for a wonderful performance.

Second Person:
Don't be foolish; how can this massive body find its way to the palace?

First Person:
But why is it grumbling and grumbling?

Second Person:
People should learn patience; that is what the elders say. People should learn patience.

First Person:
Exactly.

Second Person:
Okonedo, it is not grumbling. It must be calling people to come quickly. The man in charge is tired of waiting.

First Person:
If he is tired of waiting, then he needs to learn patience. Look at his stern face and his strange facial marks. It looks

- Who is in the centre and who is in the periphery?
- Reflecting on the benefit of being in the centre.
- Reflecting on the notion of urban drift initiated by the coming of the Longest Snake.

Reflecting on the changes that the Train brought.

- The winners are the colonialists and the real losers are the individuals and collectives in the community who could not fend for themselves – so

like happiness has departed from his part of the world. One would have expected a man of his status to be singing and dancing for being placed in charge of pulling the Longest Snake.

Second Person:
That's really true. He hardly smiles. Will such a man take people to their destinations safely? He has probably not been paid for ages. Who knows, the one in charge of his salary might have put all the salary into a personal account for another nine months to yield profit in his account before he shares it out piece by piece; piece by piece.

First Person:
A man like this should not be taking people from one city to the other. If he does not know the joy of laughter. Why should he be seen doing such an important job?

Second Person:
Perhaps his wife offended him by pounding his yam on the floor.

(They burst out laughing).

First Person:
I have never seen anything like this before in my life. I would have bought my cynical wife a ticket to come on this wonderful experience. The problem is that she will not stop talking for days and weeks and months. She will not allow me to sleep at night as she wallows in strange nightmares.

Second Person:
Why would she not have nightmares? She would have insisted on touching it for the first time, the second time and the third time.

First Person:
There is a queue. This must be the queue for boarding the train.

Second Person:
Can you see what I am seeing? The queue is actually longer than the snake.

First Person:
None of the door is open and I am sure there is a reason for this. Let us find the end of the queue and hope that we would find a seat and then find something to eat.

Second Person:
Why are people climbing onto the roof?

First Person:
What a great mistake. They should be waiting on the queue and not climbing onto the roof.

Second Person:
It is grumbling again.

First Person:

had to move to rural areas.
- Reflect on poverty as it affects the community.
- Reflecting on the corruption associated with travelling by the Longest Train.

The Chiefs as Compradors - See: Page, 61, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013).
- Reflecting on the role of Chiefs in the communities.
- Reflecting on the fear in Chiefs in the communities as they related to the colonialists.
- Reflecting on the picture of the Benin King: Does this not reflect deep trauma? Reflecting on the trauma of oppression as depicted in the picture of the king, being strategically surrounded by colonialist Lords.
- Reflecting on the looting of a kingdom. Who benefitted at last? The colonialists or the Africans?
- Reflecting on the trauma of the loss of a great kingdom. This is synonymous with Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, 1958.
- Reflecting on the dependency of Africans on the colonialists. See: Page, 77, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013).
- The characters show a subtle attraction to the train but the whole community gradually gets drawn in.

It's moving. **Second Person:** What a joke – we can't be left here after spending the whole day. **The Longest Snake:** Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **First Person:** Let's run after it. **Second Person:** It's too late: **First Person:** We should have run after it, holding on tightly. **Second Person:** You mean holding onto anything. **First Person:** That's how we will survive. **Second Person:** Let's find a more peaceful way to die. That would have been too harsh. Let's go home. **First Person:** But what are we going to tell everybody? That we almost entered the train and failed? This is a great disappointment. (They exit). **Scene Four** (The Town Crier summons the whole village to the palace as he hits a stick on a gong). **Town Crier:** This message is for you This message is for you This message is for all of us The Chief would like to see one The Chief will like to see all This afternoon This message is for you This message is for you This message is for you This message is for you This message is for all of us The Chief would like to see one The Chief will like to see all This afternoon	• Reflecting on DECOLONISATION and from the point of view of Ngugi's Decolonisation of the mind. Reading and reflecting on the creation of the Nigerian Railway: Carland, J.M (1985) The Colonial Office and Nigeria 1898-1914. California, Hoover Press. a. Chapter 6, pp.166-183 – titled: The Creation of the Baro-Kano Railway. b. P.166. I am reflecting on the notion that the railway was to be constructed by the local staff.

This message is for you
This message is for you

(All the men and women begin to assemble in the community ground. They are talking and exchanging pleasantries. The Chief begins to speak).

The Chief:
I have invited you to this meeting to discuss the fate that has suddenly befallen us. It is so sad that I have heard complaints from different quarters and thought it would be wise to confirm these insinuations in public. It's no longer news that the longest snake has caused more pain to us than bringing the prosperity we hoped for. Our pains keep increasing on a daily basis. I will like to hear from each one of you and hopefully we will all consider how to face the situation as one.

First Man:
Greetings to the Chief and the people. I personally think that we would have heeded the voice of the Eye of the future. For many years, we have learnt how to survive with what we have and the Eye of the future is one aspect that our forefathers gave to us. We should have followed his words by not allowing the longest snake into our community.

The Town Crier:
Are you insinuating that our Chief is foolish? I will not stand here and see anyone insulting our Chief. Young people of these days would not learn to control their tongues.

First Man:
I have respect for the Chief and this land and I know what courtesy demands. That is not the case. There are many Chiefs all around the place who danced with the white man and exchanged anything for precious lives. He is not one of them. There are Chiefs and there are Chiefs. What I am trying to say is that we have come to the point where each one has to speak to their pain; our pain and also loudly speak about it. We have been too silent for a long time. It could be big or small, yet, pain is pain. It could be located on one spot or plundering the whole of our body, yet we need to address our pain. It could have happened in the past, happening now or still to happen in the future; we must speak to it. If we fail to speak to our pain, others would step in and do it for us; doing it in such a way and manner that we find distasteful. Each one, tell one; each one, tell everybody. If we do not do it now, it will never be done; and the pain would linger forever.

The Chief:
Noble son, you have a good point. You cannot resist what you cannot identify. What should we do? You all remember the proverbial tale of the one who fell in a ditch. I am

reiterating this, so that each one would search deeply and find solutions from the filth that we did not bring to our door steps in the first place. When each one does something, then the whole community would have been served and we would be able to minister healing to our wounds at this point. This is an opportunity for asking questions and hoping that the

c. P.183. By 1912, the railway system connecting the coast to northern Nigeria was in operation.
d. P.183. 'The work done was not always done perfectly and the decisions taken were not always the best.'

Relating 'colonial mentality' to: Ana Monteiro-Ferreira, (2014: 61-62)

Reflection on the dislocation of communities by the coming of the Train.

- Reflecting on how the trauma affects individuals and collectives.
- Reflecting on the powerlessness of individuals and collectives.
- Reflecting on a scenario where a family lost all their cash crops to rail

community would be able to relate to pain in the best way possible. **The Town Crier:** 'Should I help him?' **All:** (The whole community echoes, 'Should I help him?') **The Chief:** I am glad you all remember the folktale. So the innocent and good man was going on his own business when he saw a man in a pit; he was apparently suffering in pain and wanted to be helped. The first thought that came to his mind was, 'Should I help him?' He wondered. If I do, what would he give to me in return? Suppose he cannot afford to pay me on this occasion and in future? Suppose he comes out of the pit and then tries to push me in the pit, thinking that he would like for me to experience his pain? Suppose, he does not tell anybody that I helped him to get out of the pit; going about the whole village and telling them that I am the one who pushed him in the pit in the first place? Suppose things change for him in the future, and he suddenly thinks that everyone in the community must go through the sort of pain he went through in the pit? So how am I supposed to know that he would be humble at the end; unlike many others whom I helped in the past that decided to pay me with evil? If I help him on this occasion, would he see his experience as an opportunity to help many others from falling into such a pit? How was I supposed to know if being in that pit was not a blessing to the community in disguise, seeing that he could use his freedom as a curse; creating similar pits everywhere and pushing innocent folks into it? In doing this, he is telling everybody to share in his experience, thereby making a religion out of his suffering. Today, we are all like that innocent man. Our community is in a pit and we have to either do something or do nothing. What are we supposed to do? The proverbial man is still in the pit. **The Town Crier:** Great wisdom; what a refreshing tale. **All:** Great wisdom. **First Man:** Strong resistance would have been our main key. We would have fought tooth and nail to send the right message to the people who brought the longest snake. **The Chief:** For too long, we have hardly spoken about our pain. Today, we are all free to speak. **First Woman:** We are told that the longest snake is the idea of the white man. Has it brought us great development and prosperity? **All:** No - no.	track construction. • Play on economic trees speaking to government officials and asking why they are being cut to satisfy projects that do not fully benefit rural dwellers. • Reflecting on the conflict between the young and the old in the communities. • Reflecting on the notion of the ghost of the past; or the trauma associated with the past. Relate to slavery, wars and ills that have traumatised Africa. NOTE THE FOLLOWING: '26. Removal of trees obstructing working

The Chief:
I am also groaning silently because three of my wives all left for the city on the same day. They were passengers in the longest train. I only have two old wives struggling to do things here and there in the house.

All:
Haaa.

First Woman:
Suddenly, the village is almost empty and people are seeing them in the city doing all sort of menial jobs to survive. Some might never come back home as a result of the shame and slur.

The Chief:
Some of my sons have also gone. Many of our capable young men are gone.

First Man:
What is annoying is the account that many bring back to the community. They say that the long snake is carting rubber, cocoa, palm kernel, to feed the ships waiting by the coast. You would have thought that we should be rich by now. Unfortunately, we are not. Instead, we are suffering with hands stretched; like beggars waiting beside a big refuse bin, waiting for coins to be dropped. For how long shall we depend on others across the sea to help us when we are the ones helping them? Why should we ask for help and why should that be the bane of our lives? Why should we feed on the leftover when the source of the wealth is right behind our yards? We have waited for too long and time does not seem to be bringing us good tidings. Who knows, if we have spent all our time to honestly look within, we would have achieved more. I can imagine the Eye of the future saying: Your waiting period is over; your friends who give you a piece at a time have hatched a plan. They have decided to increase the size of the refuse bin. You should now be living inside the bin. What? Live inside the bin?

(Another train passes bearing a large inscription: CHINA LOCO)

Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

All:
Haaa – another one.

Second Man:
Same fixed prices, same middlemen and life is still unbearable.

of railway (1) If there appears to him to be danger that a tree standing near a railway may fall on the railway so as to obstruct traffic, or may obstruct the view of any fixed signal, an officer duly authorised in that behalf by the Corporation, might fell the tree or deal with it in such other manner as will avert the danger or remove the obstruction(2) When the power conferred by subsection (1) of this section is exercised in respect of a tree on land, other than railway land, the Corporation
(3) An award of compensation under subsection (2) of this section shall be final.'
(4) 'No court shall entertain a suit to recover compensation for any tree felled or other- wise dealt with under this section. '
All culled from:
http://www.placng.org/new/laws/N129.pdf

Reflecting on resistance and on the notion that nuances of trauma are associated with the poor and defenceless in the society.

Reflecting on Joan Moore's (2010) therapeutic experience in working with substitute families. The experiment and the use of vignettes is similar to notions of devising plays in this study.

First Woman:
What is annoying is the way it is going round and round and round and round all the nook and crannies of the towns and villages collecting everything and anything along the way.

Second Woman:
If you are looking carefully, you would almost be crushed by this massive body of iron. God forbid.

First Woman:
Many have been crushed already in several villages.

All:
Please God, have mercy.

The Chief:
You are all warned to be careful as you travel in and out of the village. We must all be cautious so that we do not get crushed. As for the young man who wanted us to fight against the Officials; I will ask for patience and wisdom.

All:
Yes – yes.

The Chief:
The women in Aba fought back and they suffered great loss. The women of Abeokuta fought back and they suffered loss also.

All:
True, true.

The Chief:
We still remember how the Oba's palace in Benin was looted and ravaged as a result of one simple incident which would have been resolved with a handshake. Great carvings, bronze heads and precious ornaments were carted away to foreign nations. As far as I am concerned, there is no difference between what is happening now and what happened in the past.

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

The Chief:
That is what I am talking about. Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak that never ends.

All:
True – true.

The Chief:
The past belongs to the present and the present belongs to the past. I am not a weak Chief but what I see happening in

My personal experience with the Nigerian Railway
In Africa, we have long snakes but this long snake, (the title of my play) metaphorically reflects the train given to us in Nigeria by the British colonialists. The title reflects the fact that it virtually travels through all the main towns and villages before getting to its final destination.

I am reflecting on the notion that it was 'a parting colonialist gift?' I have travelled with the train from Jos, where I had my

this land is beyond my comprehension – for even my household is seriously affected. Let's speak to the Eye of the future once again to look into the path of wisdom and tell us what to do.

The Eye of the future (voice):
Why should I spoil the joy of my brethren?
What I am still seeing is not really good
I still see many scattered abroad
I see more people leaving the village
I see famine and diseases
Ravaging the cities and villages
When this happens, you must do something
Put yourself together as one
Move together as one

First Man:
That is the core aspect of the message that we all fail to pick.

The Town Crier:
What is the key aspect of the message? Tell us – we all want to know and we will be satisfied. There is no point in proving that we know when we do not know.

First Man:
We all heard the voice.

The Town Crier:
Do you have four ears?

First Man:
No.

The Town Crier:
So what you are trying to say is that the Chief and the whole village are deaf and totally stupid.

First Man:
You seem to be putting words in my mouth.

The Chief:
Let us not drag this matter to extremes; I listened carefully and the eye of the future says that we must be united. Unity is all we need now and we must be united in this village so that we would be able to solve our problems.

All:
Hmmm.

The Chief:
That we should act as one and resolve all the issues that concern us.

First Man:
My Chief, it's the Town Crier who is hard of hearing. He must check his ears for boils and sores before expecting others to hear his message.

The Town Crier:

first Degree to Port Harcourt to visit with my friend and family.

I am still thinking of the smell or stench of farm products. There was the harassment of beggars; mostly the blind and lepers asking for money. There were thieves too. If you were not careful your wallet would be stolen.

You could travel for days as the train kept breaking down. A journey of two days could last for almost a week.
There was the fun part too as rumours spread of everything and anything.

There was friendship – some people fell in love and did what lovers do.
There was laughter mixed with anger at the slow speed or stagnation.
There were no mobile phones then.
The train sometimes stops in the middle of nowhere. Hawkers with all manners of food would appear – serving passengers all day and night; boiled and roasted corn, sugar canes, roasted meat, fried fish, Fura, Nunu. Including all sorts of drinks and more food.

I am vicariously encountering this and wondering why such feelings have not departed after so many years.
I am reflecting on another occasion when I decided to travel by first class. The beggars found their way to that region and there was nothing like privacy there because some other passengers still found their way to that region. I remember folks who sat on top of the train. Dangerous.

Reflecting on the notion of the CENTRE
The centre metaphor for the rights of the people.
The centre seen as the rightful place where the people should belong.
The place of cultural fulfilment.
The centre as a place of achievement.
The centres as the notion for identify.
Play around the pain that the Chief causes to others. Relate to 'colonial mentality'?
See: Ana Monteiro-Ferreira, (2014: 61-62)

I will not be insulted by an ordinary man in this village who has not been given any role to perform by the Chief. I know my status in all the surrounding villages and appreciate how far my message spreads when I pass them across. So what have you achieved so far?

The First Man and the Second Man:
We have travelled in the longest snake to visit Lagos and you haven't.

The Town Crier:
Travelled in what? In a pit where people pass excreta and urinate upon one another and beggars infest with their long lines and unwashed body. Who wants to travel in that pit of slur and bad vomit? Who wants to travel in rooms smelling of rubber, rotten cocoa all products gathers from the backyards of poor innocent farmers?

Second Man:
You could insult everything about the longest snake – but you must not insult my brother and expect me to stay silent. You are always trying to pick on people because you think that you are important.

The Town Crier:
Tell us, what is so special about travelling in that stuffy and overloaded carriage with pick pockets and thugs who all converge in the city stealing and begging? Who knows what you want to do in there – perhaps to fill your bags with the goods of unsuspecting traders – thieves and tramps that have no respect for constituted authority. You will learn to respect us or I will ask one of the women to wash your mouths with salt and pepper.

First Woman:
Tell them to stop Chief – this will end in a war.

The Chief:
Let them speak and dissipate their energy and then we will go home.

The Town Crier:
Whatever way this is examined, the Chief needs to caution these youths who have brought so much disgrace to this village by speaking when they are supposed to keep quiet and listen.

Second Woman:
Is it only your voice we should hear in this village?

The Town Crier:
I am next to the Chief. If I do not protect the dignity of the Chief at this crucial moment, who would? Soon, these young men will leave us and run to the city; they will not be available to do what they have to do. I will like to put them in their right place before they all run off in the smelly snake where people sit on each other's head. A nasty piece of nasty junk that has devastated our village and the whole nation.

The Longest Snake:

Reflecting on: Dislocation – Ashcroft, Gareth and Tiffin, 2013: 85) – displacement that occurs as a result of imperial occupation. See: *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe.
` (Achebe, 1958: 124-125)

See: Hamblet, W. C. 2008: 196)

Inferring trauma in the following:

- Play on the idea that the Town Crier would have spoken earlier, lending his voice of reason to avoid much pain.

Reflecting on: Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G.

Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

The Chief:
That indeed is our problem. I think we all have to go home and think of what the eye of the future said to us. Let us walk in unity and not bring shame to this village. You are all members of this village and are appreciated for your contributions. There should be no need for petty squabbles and disagreements. The situation we are facing is more than ordinary words.

All:
True – true.

The Chief:
We must walk as one family and we must speak one voice. I will call for a long silence and then we shall dismiss. Let the trees and the shrubs hear our silence; let us respect each other after that. Silence.

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

All:
True – true.

The Town Crier:
That is how the young men are. When one speaks, another responds; disrupting the peace of the village. That is how the longest snake is; when one passes, another follows; disrupting the call for silence. The Chief says that we should all maintain silence; all of sudden what do you see and hear? Chuc chak chu chak. Chuc chak chu chak.

All:
Hmmmm.

The Chief:
(After a brief silence, the crowd is dismissed)
Go in peace and live in harmony.

All:
True, true.

They exit.

Scene Five

(Two children are seen singing and dancing – apparently

and Tiffin, H(2000) Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts. *London,* New York, Routledge
Independence – self-government. See contrasts like neo-colonialism, the comprador class (local elites) and globalisation as unavoidable mutants of independence. P.128, Post-Colonial Studies. Marginality – p.135.

Does this Chief look happy? See notions on the Benin Massacre.

- He looks depressed.
- The guards are local.
- They could be Edos or neighbours.
- They might be seen as those who have sold out; like those in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958).
- The guards look very unfriendly
- It's a taboo to treat a Chief like this in my part of Africa

Picture culled from:
https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1347&bih=979&q=Overamwen+Nogbaisi&oq=Overamwen+Nogbaisi&gs_l=img.12...3609.12546.0.14636.18.7.0.11.0.0.244.657.6j0j1.7.0....0...1ac.1.64.img..0.6.594.wWKFSAq4kUY#imgrc=C11alOwFO1iHlM%3A

NOTE: Oba Ovonramwen was the reigning Oba or King of the Benin Kingdom when the British invaded Benin in 1897. Bronzes and various antiquities were said to have been looted. He is seen here with guards in a ship on his way to exile in Calabar, Nigeria. Do these pictures portray the image of a happy king? See further: Shillington, K. (2013: 233) Encyclopaedia of African History. New York, Taylor and Francis Group.

playing a game that reveals facts about the longest train)

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Kai and Tuwa:
Here it comes

- It seems as if the King is handcuffed.
- He is very sad.
- Reflecting on his days of pomp and pageantry, those guards would not be qualified to stand close to him.

Notes and pictures culled from:
https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1347&bih=979&q=Overamwen+Nogbaisi&oq=Overamwen+Nogbaisi&gs_l=img.12...3609.12546.0.14636.18.7.0.11.0.0.244.657.6j0j1.7.0....0...1ac.1.64.img..0.6.594.wWKFSAq4kUY#imgrc=C11alOwFO1iHlM%3A

Inferring trauma in the following:

- Reflecting on the loss of culture and the neglect of cultural identity.

An oppressive pose?

(The children begin to wave)

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

Kai:
The driver is frowning at us.

Tuwa:
He must be very sad today.

Kai:
His salary is probably not been paid for months.

Tuwa:
Ha ha – an official put it in his private accounts for months.

Kai:
Perhaps the official sent the money to France or England.

Tuwa:
To hide it from the eyes of the train driver.

Kai:
To hide it from the pocket of the train driver.

Tuwa:
The train driver could be starving and dying.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:

Years later, this other king does not also look happy.
Notice the opptressive stances of the colonialists.

See the king in his full regalia.
Gaius Ikuobase Obaseki (in suit) standing second from left), Governor General Bernard Bourdillon (fifth from left) and Oba Akenzua ll the Oba of Benin (Middle). and other officials and chiefs outside the Governor's resident at Ugha Ozolua, Benin city, Nigeria, October 9th 1936.

Culled from:
https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1347&bih=979&q=Overamwen+Nogbaisi&oq=Overamwen+Nogbaisi&gs_l=img.12...3609.12546.0.14636.18.7.0.11.0.0.244.657.6j0j1.7.0....0...1ac.1.64.img..0.6.594.wWKFSAq4kUY#imgdii=wOnNVnjGZjASSM%3A%3BwOnNVnjGZjASSM%3A%3BUEj86LqP2yzMAM%3A&imgrc=wOnNVnjGZjASSM%3A

Inferring trauma in the following:

- Reflecting on urban drift.
- Play on the notion that corruption hurts.

British men posing at the Oba's palace with the great 1897 loots from the great Benin Kingdom (after the great massacre). See:http://www.nairaland.com/1987336/bring-back-crafts

The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai:
What's taking us to the city?

Tuwa:
The thing that knows the city.

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Kai:
Here comes another one facing the opposite direction.

Tuwa:
The driver is smiling at us.

Kai:
He's probably got enough bribes for the day.

Tuwa:
Sending our Cocoa and Rubber to foreign countries.

Kai:
Two for a penny – all the time.

Tuwa:
This coach smells of Cocoa.

Kai:
This coach smells of rubber.

Tuwa:
This coach smells of Cocoa.

Kai:
This coach smells of rubber.

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Tuwa:
This coach smells of Cocoa.

Kai:
This coach smells of rubber.

Tuwa:
This coach smells of Cocoa.

Kai:

Question: What could be inferred from this picture from the context of the indigenous people? How would the Africans have reacted? How would they react in present days?
Picture and article culled from: http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/mar/18/story-of-cities-5-benin-city-edo-nigeria-mighty-medieval-capital-lost-without-trace

'This is the story of a lost medieval city you've probably never heard about. Benin City, originally known as Edo, was once the capital of a pre-colonial African empire located in what is now southern Nigeria.

The Benin empire was one of the oldest and most highly developed states in west Africa, dating back to the 11th century.
The Guinness Book of Records (1974 edition) described the walls of Benin City and its surrounding kingdom as the world's largest earthworks carried out prior to the mechanical era. According to estimates by the New Scientist's Fred Pearce, Benin City's walls were at one point "four times longer than the Great Wall of China, and consumed a hundred times more material than the Great Pyramid of Cheops."

Reflecting on the notion of corruption. How might this contribute to poverty and dependency?

- Play on notion that many are

This coach smells of rubber.

Kai and Tuwa:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Tuwa:
He's throwing excreta on our land.
He's throwing urine on our roads.

Kai and Tuwa:

Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
The longest snake indeed

Tuwa:
It's throwing excreta on our land and killing our crops.
It's throwing urine on our roads and burning our crops.
It's an abomination.

(They burst out laughing)
(The Chief who was passing by, waited and listened to the children for a while)

The Chief:
Little children – go home. Go and help your parents at home. Find something better to do.

(The children run off laughing)

The Town Crier:
You see, they know what is going on.

The Chief:
What's this world turning into?

The Town Crier:
It's strange.

The Chief:
When we were children, only adults knew what was going on and we thought people lived in the moon. I pray that these children would not sell us to the white man and put the money in their pockets.

The Town Crier:
It's a strange world.

The Chief:
What brings you my way today?

The Town Crier:
The village is becoming empty. I thought I should whisper this to your ear so that you would not hear it from another source.

The Chief:
What is the problem?

traumatised as a result of urban drift.
- Add that those left behind in communities are likely not going to recover from the shock and pain.

How similar to Esan folktale experience?
In this Krwedede tale, the child was being maltreated by the stepmother having lost the mother. The father and the community are not protective, negating the collectivist identity. The reason for the mother's death is not revealed and the narrator is certainly a member of the community. Like contexts in Achebe,s *Things Fall Apart* and (1958), Soyinka's (1975) text. Trauma traits are seen in this precolonial wedding celebration(Losambe and Sarinjeive, 2001: 24)
Today we leave you, today you will be insulted,
They say you are a witch, our child.
Today we leave you, today you will cry
They say you have got thin legs, our child.
Be tolerant, be tolerant, be tolerant,
Our child.

I am exploring the possibility of convention and non-conventional plays. Let's assume that I have written all the non-conventional plays. They sound elitist. Then the non-conventional plays will respond to cultural needs in Africa. Reflecting on the idea that praxis is tilted to elites.

- I am reflecting on African folktales and folk narratives.

- I am bringing my perspective of storytelling sessions in Esan in Africa. The actions and the reactions of the narrator and audience suggest trauma. The content of the tales also suggest trauma seeing the oppression of some characters like the poor, orphans and the second wife.

The Town Crier:
My wife and children have all deserted me for the city.

The Chief:
If we all go to the city, who will remain here and preserve our heritage?

The Town Crier:
Chief, which is my fear. But what should I do when my wife and children left early this morning and said I should join them there. They left by the first train.

The Chief:
What this longest snake would do has no end. When there was no train, we all lived in harmony. Now, it has opened the doors to the city and we have lost our finest youths, elders and crops. So what is going on here?

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

The Town Crier:
There it goes – the pain of our nation.

The Chief:
Chuc chak chu chak and we have nothing to show but empty pots and pans in empty houses where men and women used to live and thrive happily.

The Town Crier:
We can't stop them now – it's too late.

The Chief:
We could not stop them from the beginning. This pain is too hard to bear. We have not forgiven the white man for taking our kit and kin as slaves; now we are bombarded by new evils. Where do we stand if what we know is being corroded when we were promised peace and prosperity in the first place? You ask for Adim, he's left for the city – you ask for Okon, he's left for the city – you ask for Obehi – he's left for the city and in most cases their wives and children are with them. Even my wife and children have all deserted me. What a shame.

The Town Crier:
I came to bid you farewell. I am leaving also. I hope to visit the village in about few months and see what is going on here. Goodbye.

The Longest Snake:
Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

Chuc chak chu chak
Chuc chak chu chak

- The reactions of the storyteller are reflected on the audience who mimic the reactions of pain and suffering or jerking of tears.

I am reflecting on Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (2014) and Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (2000) The notion of the theatre of the oppressed is important to the situation in Africa considering the notion of colonial oppression.

- Reflecting on the reason why many move to the urban area from the rural areas.
- Why the lure to the city? Why are the rural areas not being developed?
- Reflecting on the effect of Colonialism on African cultures.
- Reflecting on urban drift once again.

Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **The Chief:** I have nothing else to say to you. The train has come for you. Good bye. (At this point, the first woman runs into the scene, followed by the second woman) **First Woman:** I am sorry to be a bearer of bad news. **The Chief:** What's happening again? **Second Woman:** The City stinks Chief. **The Chief:** It must certainly stink since all the people have all decided to put their loads in one house there. **First woman:** We went to buy and sell in Lagos. At Oyigbo Market, we heard ole ole ole. Strange it was one of our sons from this village. **The Chief:** Whose child? **Second Woman:** We are too scared to say. **The Chief:** What happened to him? Tell me – I need to know. I have always known that the longest snake stands for evil. **First Woman:** They put necklace around him and burnt him alive. **The Chief:** Wonders will never end. **First Woman:** He cried and cried and nobody could dare go near the mob. **The Chief:** Bad news indeed. But whose child is this? **Second Woman:** We promised not to break the news. But it's your first son. **The Chief:** O grief; O grief. I told him and his mother not to go to the city. My son - my son - my dear son. It's too late now. Too late now. (The women hide their faces in their hands as a few folks gather round the square to console the Chief as they all sing a dirge).	Reflecting on the possible pain that colonialist change brought to Africa. Inferring Trauma and echoing events in *Things Fall Apart,* Achebe, 1958.

The Longest Snake: Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **The Chief:** The Eye of the future said it clearly. That what was coming was not really good; that many would be scattered abroad – that many would leave the village; that there would be famine and disease. That when this happens, we must stand together as one; that we must pull together as one. Who would have known that I would be so badly affected? Who would have predicted that our land would be plunged into this? **The Longest Snake:** Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak Chuc chak chu chak **The End**	

Appendix 2

Play - **The Endless Walk**

By Isi Agboaye

CHARACTERS

1st Man
2nd Man
Unknown Voice

INTRODUCTION:

This play is based on the experiences of immigrants taking the risk of travelling through dangerous conditions from Africa to Europe. The plot of the play features a man who travelled with many others across the fierce weather of the Sahara Desert in search of greener pastures in Europe. Although a few of them were nearly marooned, they made it to the shores of Spain through the Mediterranean Ocean; where they faced uncertain expectations.

NOTES:
Reflective notes for understanding postcolonial trauma.

Questions

- What could the motivations of the characters be?
- What are the possible conditions in the Sahara Desert?
- Could someone be held responsible for the problems that precipitated the journey through the Sahara?
- Do they really know that the Sahara is dangerous, reflecting on the fierce nature of the Sahara.
- Should the Government be held responsible for not providing for the people?
- The notion that people are stuck in the Sahara regions reveal that many would probably be going through pains or even death. To what extent could such pains be related to colonialist involvement in Africa?

Reflecting on how migrants risk all to cross the Sahara Desert.
https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=2021&bih=1037&q=Nigerians+travelling+to+Europe through+the+Sahara+desert&oq=Nigerians+travelling+to+Europethrough+the+Sahara+desert&gs_l=img.3...2968.19348.0.19821.55.13.0.42.42.0.82.904.13.13.0....0...1ac.1.64.img..0.24.965...0j0i30j0i8i30j0i24.23qKX96eiZE#imgrc=wJRqQnaKaVO0DM%3A

- Also reflecting on the notion of the **centre and the periphery**. See: Chapter One.

Scene One: The Preparation

(Setting on a minimalist set and style)

1st Man:
My dear friend, since you are so determined to go on this trip, I will spend time to tell you my story. Do you have the time to listen to this story that sounds like a folktale?

2nd Man:
Yes. It will inspire me in certain ways.

1st Man:
You don't want to hear my story.

2nd Man:
There are countless young people who are thinking of this same trip. I am not the only one. Your story will be very helpful.

1st Man:
I shouldn't have taken that route to Algeria. At least I am home with loads of regret. What difference does it make? I am home at last to my friends and family; whatever that means in the face of extreme poverty and frustration. There are many that were less fortunate; their bones litter the Sahara Desert. It now seems like a dream.

2nd Man:
Tell me everything – I want to hear it all.

1st Man:
It is my life story and life journey; I would like to share it with anybody – the seen and the unseen. Anyone could listen deliberately or even eavesdrop. They might decide to share it with their friends, neighbours, relatives and neighbours who would share it with their acquaintances and all within their immediate vicinity.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

1st Man:
It all started one day when a friend of mine came with one of those crazy ideas of travelling through the Sahara Desert to Europe.

Reflecting on the African epistemological essence in the thesis.

- The narrative form of the play is related to folktales in parts of Africa. The role of the main character is akin to that of storytellers and the second character is akin to the audience. See: Finnegan, R(2012) *Oral Literature in Africa.* Cambridge, Open Book Publishers.
- It is possible to perceive a call and response pattern in the dialogue or conversation. See: Page XVI, Lynch, P.A. and Roberts, J(2010) African Mythology A to Z. New York, Chelsea House.

Who are these characters?

- The characters in the play could be anybody's child in Africa.
- They could be underprivileged folks.
- They are graduates from the Universities in Africa who certainly have some knowledge of what is going on around the world; their pain being that they cannot enjoy what others have in abundance.
- They read books and also have read a lot of books and are influenced by many writers and musicians who have revolutionary ideas.
- They are tired of waiting for the government and deciding to act on their emotions.
- They are exaggeratedly optimistic, not thinking about the dangers of wandering into an unknown space.

2nd Man:
Fantastic.

1st Man:
At this time we were fed up being jobless. I remember saying that all the billions of our nation were either stored in foreign banks by our corrupt politicians. Foreign business conglomerates are busy fixing all the prices of our products and mapping us further into poverty. This was after we had tried farming and discovered that the middle men were conniving with the foreign companies to scheme us out of our wealth and the good life. We were blocked; we had nothing to look forward to.

2nd Man:
With University Degrees in your hands like mine.

1st Man:
We had nothing to show for the Degrees.

2nd Man:
That's it.

1st Man:
We thought we could do something. That since the politicians had stored most of the billions belonging to the country in foreign banks; we could as well travel to those countries find a way out of poverty. After all, they are strong nations economically. We just decided to travel, telling our parents and relatives that we were going up north to do some business. With our little knowledge of Geography, we thought that there would be no need to ask questions. At least we knew that Spain was not too far from the edge of Africa. Mind you, we were not the first to embark on this sort of trip. Many others had done so. The few that succeeded sent coloured pictures back home and we have never heard from many others who did not succeed.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

1st Man:
Strange. We had no maps, no compass.

2nd Man:
That must be hard. Certainly more difficult than any experience that I have been through. Could you not afford to buy Maps and a Compass?

Inferring trauma from this notion that sounds like regret:
'If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?'

- Note: The character's idea of Europe as a place where wealth is stored for them to explore. Could this be greed or notions echoing dependency. See: Page, 77, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013).

- Relate to African proverbs and wise sayings associated with the old and elderly in Africa. Call on the wise ones to speak to our young ones who are perishing in the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Ocean on their way to find wealth in foreign nations.

MODE OF PREPARATION

- Trauma is reflected in the mode of preparation – reflecting lack of knowledge about the Sahara Desert.

1st Man:
No. We were very excited; just as you are now. Armed with our primary school knowledge of Geography, we headed north towards Maiduguri from Lagos. This was after borrowing money from friends here and there. We travelled for a few days by road and finally arrived Maiduguri; a city in Northern Nigeria. This was the most enjoyable aspect of the trip as we had the luxury of public transport being driven through well tarred roads and we still saw faces that reminded us of our kith and kin down south. But we were rather apprehensive having to choose between penury and taking a hazardous journey.

We arrived Baga by the Lake Chad and waited for another month for the end of the rains before thinking of what to do. At this time, the short raining season in this part of the country lasted for weeks with torrential rains and winds that destroyed houses. We soon acclimatised to the foods and the conditions and one of us thought that we could begin a business of some sort, selling fish between Baga, around Lake Chad and Maiduguri. We made some profit and were able to buy an old rickety land rover which we thought would we useful for our trip. We were told it was not properly fitted with expensive gadgets that would make it desert worthy; so we sold it off. During our stay in Maiduguri and Baga, we had a bit of fun, mixing with the indigenes and learning the language. For some reason, we would not allow Maiduguri to sip into us and we were aware that we could not settle there and get jobs as non-indigenes. Even if we were accepted and given jobs, we had already made up our minds to travel to Europe to seek for better life. Before we left, we drank much of the local brew, Burukutu – particularly popular in Jos and we ate so much fish to last us a life time before we embarked on travelling through the Sahara.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

1st Man:
We were determined to travel and reach our destination – any European city. We believed that if we get there, life would change for us and we would survive. We were also dreaming of the sort of images that adorned postcards sent by friends who had made it to Europe. We dreamt of beautiful cites, neon lights, fast cars and money littering everywhere. There, women bought handbags with millions of pounds or Euros. There, lights never go out at night. We have always had these ideas from postcards, magazines and movies that they lived in colours and we lived in black and white.

Inferring trauma from the following:

- Reflecting on what those who are lost in the Sahara could have been to the continent of Africa.
- Reflecting on the wealth of knowledge that are wasted and talents that lay untapped.
- Reflecting on the gifts and talents that some of them had in the community which they took away with them forever; stuck in the Sahara Desert.
- Play on the notion that those who run out of money in the Sahara Desert will not have friendly neighbours to ask for help.
- Reflect on the notion of regrets as a notion of pain.
- Reflect on the notion that the conditions at home are not probably as bad as the difficult situations of the Sahara routes.

See this link on the effects of the harsh conditions in the Sahara Desert:
https://danielnkrumah.wordpress.com/2011/12/23/desert-tragedy-ghanaians-perish-in-torturous-expedition-to-europe/

Scene Two: Then the Journey Started

1st Man:
We were determined to avoid middle men as much as possible because there were weird companies that had ideas on how to cross the Sahara Desert. You had to pay them through your nose. We had our own personal plan based on snippets of information we gathered living in Maiduguri for a few months. We took as many provisions as possible but most of them were either unnecessary of too heavy for our crossing. We should have saved our money since most versions about life on that trip did not inform us that at a certain stage our loads will be too heavy for the trip. We were so choked in the vehicle that a stage I thought I would break a bone. It was obvious that the vehicle operators wanted maximum profit at all cost to the detriment of our lives. There was no comfort in the vehicle and the roads were pretty bumpy at certain parts of the trip. The driver would not wait for us to stop and stretch our legs because he had this mission to get to his destination as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, the prevailing discussions in the vehicle were versions of how to cross the desert. Who and what to avoid and when and where to stop or not to stop. Soon, we started feeling the strange heat of the desert; we were seriously baked in the vehicle and we would not complain because we had a mission to face. In a whole day, we would stop only once or twice to ease ourselves. It seemed like some folks did it on themselves anyway as we could hardly stand the terrible stench in the vehicle.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

1st Man:
There were so many legal and illegal toll gates on the way. Sometimes, the faces of the officers were concealed and the driver went to have a chat with them in low tones. We were forbidden to loot at the transaction for fear of being shot and killed. We heard stories about travellers who had dared to look and were forcefully removed from the vehicles and killed. We were basically travelling in great fear. Whenever the vehicle stopped, we rushed into our bags for anything to eat. At first we would share generously but when we started falling low of provisions, we decided to ration what we had for we had no clue of what to do if we ran out of food and water in what seemed like an endless sea of sand in all directions with our vehicle being a tiny dot in the massive vicinity of sand and blinding dust. What seemed even strange was the occasional mirage

Inferring trauma from the following:

- Reflecting on the pain of those who have never walked on massive sand dunes and do not know the frustration of the dust and the burning heat of the Sahara.
- Reflecting on the notion of living with corrupt politicians with poverty as the only gain that is available.
- The pain of the middle men.
- What does it look like to have nothing to live for?
- Relating to the pain of living in an under developing nation.

that fooled us to think that there was a river in front of us. The further we travelled, the sooner we realised that it was nothing but an optical illusion. We stumbled on settlements, camps and small villages and the driver was determined to keep racing on.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

1st Man:
Finally, the vehicle stopped in a sort of camp; an Oasis where people gathered round few shades to water their camels. It also served as a small market but not in the sense of markets at home. They seemed oblivious of our presence because they have certainly seen several folks like us in the past. What was thrilling to the heart was the music from their transistor radios, belting out Arabic songs. Although we were told that we would we stopped further than the driver did, we undoubtedly knew that he had cheated us by dropping us short of the distanced that we paid for the trip. But who would challenge him in such a strange setting where we could not communicate reasonably with anybody due to the language barrier. Some of the people we met were quite hospitable while others were extortionists, wanting us to pay for any help they offered, including where to buy water and food.

2nd Man:
That seems scary.

1st Man:
From the very start, we were faced by human forces that militated against us. There were robbers and strange militants that took control of certain portions of the way and demanded that we paid fees before we would we allowed to continue on our trip. We spent a few days to recuperate at the settlement where the driver stopped us. We were all able to share one dilapidated hut with no bed or beddings. We all cramped inside it; all men and women, having paid the amount each person was expected to contribute each day. After a few days, we set off. Generally heading north. We met more folks along the way who seemed to know what they were doing but we soon found out that they were even worse than us in terms of finding their way in the obscure desert.

2nd Man:
Did you ask questions?

1st Man:

Inferring trauma from the following:

- Reflecting on the pain associated with the loss of African identity when the colonialists came to Africa. See Achebe, 1958 and Soyinka, 1991 – explored in the Literature Review.
- Reflect the adoption of religiosity or the mixture of it; as one of the elements associated with colonialism.
- Reflecting on the notion of self-help; within the context of living in a nation where there is lack of care.
- Reflecting on the desperation of many young folks. Relate this to the traumatic notion of the proverbial African fly that accompanies the corpse to the grave.
- Reflecting of half knowledge of those who communicated this knowledge and why did they took this knowledge seriously.
- Spain seems close to Africa – but it is not safe getting there.
- Reflecting on the persistent pain of poverty in Africa. Reflecting on the painful notion that very many fail where only a few succeed.

We certainly did; but we did not get reasonable or helpful answers. At one point, I had to buy a vehicle off one of the travellers who decided to return home – saying that he had been wondering about the desert for nearly a year. I sort of figured that his vehicle would we helpful and we would we quite fast, not wondering why he did not succeed himself. What was equally interesting was that we met so many characters along the way. I choose to call them characters because many of them had adopted personalities that looked like strange travellers who were almost becoming marooned. They spoke no African language and some gave the impression that they were better than others. There were some who were apparently depressed or frustrated; blaming any and everybody for their misfortune. There was hardly any joy on the trip except when some of the folks decided to entertain others with their funny narratives of books they had read or about experiences with University lecturers who had forced them to have sex for marks under tables and in weird settings. Sometimes we could hardly laugh because the atmosphere was too tense. We did laugh when we could not help but laugh. We had some spiritualists among us who were neither Christians or African traditional spiritualists. They prayed and sang all night calling on God and all sorts of angels and African deities to assist us on the trip. There was a day they even forced us all to fast and pray for two days – saying that one of them dreamt that a helicopter landed in front of us in the desert and took us all to Spain. We all fasted happily but the helicopter never came after two weeks of serious trekking. Soon, they stopped praying but rather groaned all night in their sleep due to the frustration and the pain of the journey. There was a guy we called Bob Marley who belted reggae songs when he was not hungry. There was the philosopher who kept us entertained with all sorts of theories and ideas; making us to wonder why he did not get a job in one of the Universities at home. There was the guy we all called Engineer. It turned out that he studied mechanical engineering from one of the Universities down south. Unfortunately, he did not know the difference between a screwdriver and a spanner; neither could he help when we had problems with the vehicle. But we all took solace in the fact that the vehicle would take us somewhere. Before I sold the vehicle, we faced breakdowns upon breakdowns that we decide to walk and sold off the vehicle to folks who promised to send us the money once we settle in any European country. We were forced to believe them because we had no use for the vehicle in the first place. We also knew that they were clearly telling a lie because we had seen many of such crooks on the trip. We walked for so many miles and were sometimes forced to carry the helpless or sick ones on our backs. At a point,	**Inferring trauma from the following:** • Reflecting on why had to hide their identity. This is related to the pain of dislocation. See: Page, 86, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013). Reflecting on the notion that taking the risk to travel through the Sahara desert might be the last time some folks set their eyes on their homeland. That itself is deep pain. • Reflecting on why so many folks would be running to Europe. What about the pain of leaving ones' homeland despite the thought of seeking for greener pastures. • Reflecting on the notion that it makes no sense embarking on the trip knowing that it isnot be possible to find your way back if you change your mind half way through the trip. • Reflecting on the notion that wasting lives in the Sahara Desert is synonymous to under developing Africa. There is the notion of pain in that too. • Play on the notion that folks must not wait for politicians to help them succeed. Add that they should develop ventures that would open doors to success. **Inferring trauma from the following:**

we considered coming back home but we had travelled too far to relent at this time.

I failed to mention that there were some ladies in our team who hardly shared any information about themselves. They could have taken a sort of oath or operating under a different agenda that restricted them from divulging information on their plans and purposes. There were some other ladies who would not speak to us, saying that they do not speak to folks like us. Yet, they made sure we added them to our team though we never knew their plans. We were like guides who did not have a clue about our destination.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

2nd Man:
Why?

Scene Three: Towards the end of the Storm

1st Man:
If home was indeed home, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was home would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing? Hmm. Our main problem was water. We had to buy water and when we started running out of real cash, we would trade out cloths, hats and belts for water. Soon, we figured that it would make sense to have a guide so we all put some money together and hired one. We were so determined to get to the point where we were told we would get a raft or ferry or even a ship to take us onto Europe. Some of us had already started challenging the only engineer in our midst to come up with the design of a raft that would take us across from the most convenient point in Africa to the shores of Spain. At one stage, he had started flexing is muscles in readiness to construct a raft and had already started talking about specifications and angles. Soon, there were a few others – notably the mathematician and a geographer in our midst who thought that his figures did not add up. They basically opined that if we went into his raft, we could all perish or probably start off from square one. We all agreed and the plan was aborted.

The weather was terrible. The sand storms were fierce and we had to cover our faces with any rag we could find. We were able to understand why the Arabs wore the sort of cloths that revealed little of nothing of their

- Reflecting on the notion that they would have quit, seeing the early warning signs.
- Reflecting on the notion that folks can channel their drive and determination towards developing Africa in little ways rather than waste their lives in a hot desert.
- Reflecting on the notion that one might succeed and arrive at the shores of Europe only to be sent back home by the next available flight. What is the point of putting in so much and losing so much at the end?
- Reflect on the pain of being called an economic migrant.
- Reflecting on those who flee African nations as a result of the persecution of despotic governments. Reflect on the pain that many cannot sadly stay at home and fight back.
- The pain of wandering around the Sahara and seeing the carcasses of those who had wandered around previously.
- Reflecting on the Sahara routes that have seen the demise of many youths whose destine were cut short on the harsh dunes and fierce winds of the Sahara Desert.
- Reflecting on the paranoia due to the frustration of the long travel across the Sahara.

Inferring trauma from the following:

physical statures. Due to the fierceness of the weather, many could not cope. Some had started bleeding terribly from their nostrils and many more could not breathe. During the day, it seemed like one was breathing dust and air piped from a hot furnace of live coals. We were forced to leave some of the very tired ones behind – unfortunately we had become so close that it was painful to abandon them – not knowing what would become of them. What was uppermost on our minds was that we either keep walking or stop walking. **Unknown Voice:** If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing? **1st Man:** After a few days, our guide abandoned us and we were left on our own. The problem was that we could not come up with the sort of payment he wanted from us. We had nothing to give him since we were saving the little we had for the remaining part of the journey. As soon as he left us, we knew that we would face harder days and that things would not be as easy without our guide. With him, it was easy to know what to do and what not to do. He helped us through short cuts so as to avoid desert marauders, terrible robbers and mercenaries who were fleeing from wars. We kept meeting more folks like us on the way many carcases of dead folks who have either fallen ill or met one uncertain tragedy or the other. We wondered what would happen to us if we fall ill of if due to one misfortune of the other we could not continue. There were strange buzzing insects and flies. There were dreaded snakes of different shapes and sizes and we saw them gliding through the sand and knew that we had no business with them neither did they have any with us. We were watchful so that we would not be bitten by snakes or stung by strange looking scorpions which had so much adapted to the colour of the sand. But in all these, we were so determined to get to the edge of Africa where we would we welcomed by the sea. **2nd Man:** What happened at night? My contact said that it can be extremely cold. That it would we necessary to take a warm jacket. **1st Man:** Survival was the key. We sometimes clustered together to give each other heat. **2nd Man:** Men and the women?	• Reflecting on the notion that you cannot risk your life through a dangerous journey with only a handful of information to guide you through. Add that there is pain in lack of knowledge. • Reflecting on the pain that middle men cause. They feed fat on the wealth of poor immigrants, leading them to misfortune and doom. • Reflect on the notion that many educated Africans travelled to Europe without crossing the dangerous Sahara Desert. They came back in peace and helped to build the nation. • Reflect on the pain that they are not vocal in bringing change or rather, whatever they are contributing is not felt. **Inferring trauma from the following:** • Reflecting on the calibre of

1st Man:
Yes, men and women. We were devoid of amoral feelings; we just wanted to survive.

2nd Man:
Hmm.

1st Man:
It was terribly cold at night. Sometimes we slept under the stars or just decided to walk for miles and miles; only stopping to rest for a while or refresh ourselves in the few water sources that were frequented by wild animals. Experience they say if the best teacher. We had to learn to avoid them. Water is precious to both humans and animals and we learn not to rush into any Oasis.

2nd Man:
Awesome; incredible.

1st Man:
Travelling without a guide was not interesting – neither was there really an interesting part of the endless journey. We walked in such a way that sometimes it seemed as if we had no legs and we arrived some settlements or villages walking as if we were drunk with blisters that took days to heal. In most situations we had no business settling in such settlements because we were neither welcome nor needed as we could read from their faces and harsh tones. Some of them were hospitable – but some were simply indifferent to our cause.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

1st Man:
In one of such camps and settlements, we had recovered enough to join in the festivities that were going on at that particular time. But we knew the essence of our goals and time was not on our side. We ate and drank as much as we could, knowing that such would not be available as we continued on the trip. Even when we took more of the free offerings, the heat of the desert would not be hospitable to preserve the foods for us. Out uppermost thought was the end of the journey which was nowhere in sight. We had to walk and walk and walk and walk. That was our main occupation. To keep body and soul together, we reflected on our nation, on the corrupt leaders who spent our petroleum billions on their families and girlfriends. We reflected on books that kept us thinking

people who embarked on this journey. It would be inferred that they were also educated. Meaning that they could be referred to as economic migrants in some cases. They could be fleeing persecution or war.

- Reflecting on the pain of being exposed to dangerous conditions.

- Reflect on a scenario - an inquisition in which the government is represented by officials. They are censured on why many young people travel through the Sahara Desert to Europe – risking their dear lives. They are told to bring change.

Inferring trauma from the following:

- Reflecting on the pain of suffering in

about Africa and all that we have had to endure as a result of differences that were forced on us by colonisation. We wondered why we could not rule ourselves and why we had to depend on foreign nations for help ever so often. We would debate far for miles and sometimes waiting at certain spot to settle differences which were mostly ideological.

We debated everything and anything under the sun. Sometimes our voices echoed in the desert that we wondered if we would we given awards for being so loud. We had certain days that were dedicated to specific themes. One day, we debated the rationale behind Ngugi's Decolonisation of the Mind; on another day, it was Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe. Another day, it was the sense in the Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad, followed by the foolishness of making us act Shakespeare in Schools in Africa. Frantz Fanon's The Wretched of the Earth was debated for a few days and some of us even quoted favourite aspects of the book. We spent nearly a whole week debating Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. You would have thought that there would be no dissenting views; there were. Some clearly opined that it's actually Africa that underdeveloped Africa – coming up with ideas that ran contrary to the notions in Rodney's book. In all the hot arguments, we were careful to warn one another that we were only having fun and passing time.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

2nd Man:
That was a whole world of experience.

1st Man:
Don't get me wrong; it easy to remember the grim periods than the interesting periods. There were dramatic moments when we were entertained by some of us who parodied world leaders of lecturers in the Universities. It was interesting to note that some of us were educated to the hilt. Counting, there were some who had two degrees. That meant nothing to them now, they were willing and looking forward to any job – in toilets, and restaurants – just to survive. They had heard that the least job in Europe was better than being jobless at home or struggling with a job at home that spelt no future or hope.

We kept walking and because used to seeing dead humans and animals along the way. When we lacked food, some even thought of eating part of the dead animals; but some others cautioned that it would we a

Africa and also in the Sahara Desert.
- Reflecting on who should be held responsible for the pain of poverty reflected in the created play and the continent of Africa.
- The image of poverty reflected here helps one to understand the notion of poverty in Africa.
- The pain of ethnic conflicts.
- The eating habits reflect pain.

Reflecting on the following and also inferring trauma from them:

- Note the paradox of why some African nations are rich, yet very poor.

dangerous thing to do. At this point we had no bags and basic necessities that we had held on to at the beginning of the trip. We now had our basic wears and we were clad in strange outfits in most cases in other to survive the heat of the sun. Although some of us still had some money, there was hardly anything to buy on the way. In some cases, we took to eating strange fruits – waiting to see if birds would eat them before we pounced on them. We thought about home a lot. We started wondering if staying in penury was not better than the dangers that we had exposed ourselves. Such self-doubts fizzled when we started acting out our expectations when we finally get to Europe. This lifted our spirits.

Soon, there were fewer settlements along the way. We would walk for days and not find any settlement or Oasis. We had started looking as if we were mad folks whose vital mental faculties had gone on recess. We could not see clearly; their eye sights were becoming dim. The mirages became a constant feature as some of us got more and more frustrated when they discovered that the glimmering water at the horizon was not real. It reminded us about our whole mission – as we were afraid that our suffering would end in futility. Some even had hallucinations at night when we stopped to rest. Strange things occurred and we had no explanations or any help.

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

2nd Man:
So you kept walking?

1st Man:
We did.

2nd Man:
Even in such hopeless situations?

1st Man:
We certainly did.

2nd Man:
That was brave.

1st Man:
We tried to entertain ourselves. Let me put you through it. I will play Adu; you flow along by playing Ako

- Note the activities of outsiders and colonialists who rendered the area poor.
- The pain of slavery still persists like an echo.
- The pain that colonialism took and never gave.
- The pain within the notion that there is poor administration in Africa.
- The pain of corruption.
- The pain of the widening gap between the rich and poor.

See link on how migrants risk all to cross the Sahara Desert.

http://www.irinnews.org/report/80835/west-africa-migrants-risk-all-cross-desert

Reflecting on poverty in Africa

- The painful picture of poverty as a reflection of poor quality of life.
- The painful images of poverty as reflected in uncollected rubbish, potholes and collapsing drains.

(They step into the new roles by putting on simple costumes). In one of the plays titled, THE DESERT STINGS, WE ARE STILL HERE, two characters, Adu and Ako entertain a group of travellers from Africa, obviously us, who stop to entertain themselves somewhere in the Sahara Desert. This was after a tedious day under the gruelling sunshine and unforgiving hellish sand of the Sahara Desert. The anticipated destination is Europe obviously. What is intriguing in the narrative is that the two main characters communicate with other unseen characters. The main idea of the play is to encourage the unseen characters to emulate us and write about their experiences. Let's begin now. Adu: Don't tell me you are too tired to write. Hopefully, narratives of our painful experiences would not be blown off by the Sahara Desert – seeing that the sand is our only writing pad. The audience laughs. Laugh with them, this is not the worst part of our experience. At least we are doing something sensible within our present circumstances. At least we have the power to design or redesign our circumstances and histories with words. The audience laughs. Ako: Where should we begin? Adu: Let's encourage these wonderful faces full of anticipation. We are dealing with a whole continent. Ako: The whole continent of Africa? Do they look like people who want to open old wounds or reveal fresh aches buried in experiences? Adu: Listen; do something reasonable. We are partially dead, but we are working through the path of hope here. I will leave you for a bit and do what is meaningful. Look at all these wonderful faces surrounding us. You are all welcome. Let's get on to the real task; let's write. Silver and gold have I not; but such as I have been given, I give thee; so write. Ako: Write? Why, how, where? (Laughs sarcastically and goes into a momentary trance) They are coming. Adu: Write it anywhere Write it everywhere On barks of trees On dry leaves On the wall of houses On the table of your hearts Print the exact accounts	• The pain of poor management in Africa. • Reflecting on the notion that there must be a way to end poverty in Africa. • Ask some in the audience what they think we should do to end the trauma of poverty in Africa. Reflecting my personal experiences of the pain of poverty in Nigeria. This is seen as a precursor to the experiences of these characters in the Sahara Desert. • Lack of jobs – graduate unemployment inclusive. General state of poverty which affected many Nigerians. This could be seen on the streets and reflected in individuals and families. • Insecurity due to robberies which are sometimes violent on highways and around the housing estates. • Poor health care facilities. Hospitals were not well equipped with Doctors, who might have been attracted to foreign countries where they were well paid. There were no adequate medications. Individuals bought their own; in this situation, fake medicine dealers had a field day as many folks died for taking fake medicines. • In some hospitals, folks sleep on the floor as there was hardly any bed space. There were no pillows except you brought yours to the hospital. **Inferring trauma from the following:** • Reflecting on the notion that wars are crippling the continent of Africa – coupled with the notion that the Continent's greatest needs are not met through wars.

Of sweat Of blood Of tears Of death Do not forget the torture Of men Of women Of children Of princes Of Kings Ako: So much to relate – this would take a life time. Adu: Certainly. Can you imagine the picture of everybody doing all they can to write something? Look to your left; see the image of the young and the old; men and women scurrying around to write. Look at that little girl teaching her grandma to write. That's awesome – they are doing exactly what I have told them to do. Suddenly there is the unity of purpose in the continent. I have cracked something. Ako: This will take forever. Let's contrive a reasonable plan. Adu: How? Ako: We need a Faculty; we need the officers and a curriculum. We have not even bribed those who are always blocking the way. Adu: This is an opportunity Let's hit the ground and write. Listen; write all you would like to say From all that they remember They will be useful tomorrow Touch everything The part the women forget, Let the men write; The part the men forget, Let the women write Write from your thoughts Touch everything Ako: (Sarcastically) All that you saw All that you heard All that you tasted All that you smelt All that you touched All that you felt Adu: Indeed Write and analyse; examine little things Write and persuade; argue – front and back Write and explain; clarify to satisfy Write and inform; enlighten to bring common sense	• Reflecting on the notion that many wars in Africa impoverish the continent. • Relate the wars to Colonialism and effects of Colonialism. See: Chapter One and the Literature Review. • Reflecting on the pain of economic and human resources that are not tapped for the benefit of Africa. See notions of Neo-colonialism in the Introductory Chapter. • Reflecting on the pain of loss of self-identity and self-worth. • Reflecting on the pain of lack of a healing process from periods of 'colonialist occupation.' **Inferring trauma from the following:** • Reflecting on the pain of lack self-invention in the context of all the problems faced by Africa. • Reflecting on the pain that the elites

Ako: We are going too far.

Adu: (Goes into a momentary trance) They are coming.

Ako: Who? Stop messing around. If they had done this instead of sharing the nation inch by inch to fit their pockets, we would have been a great continent that does not relay on others to chart our history.

Ako: I did not study history. I studied Chemistry.

Adu: Of what benefit is that to you in this hell? Write. (Turning to the crowd) This is awesome. Look at the camaraderie; see the collective notion displayed. Can you imagine the enthusiasm? Although the hospital is miles and miles away, many would endure their pain and write. I can imagine that there are many with toothache in the crowd. Many with aches that only time and scars can reveal. Some are confused and many are not – yet, they are willing to write.

Ako: I am thinking of reality. How would this put bread on their table?

Adu: The truth is, if they forget, they would never remember or ever be inspired to write. Look; can't you see they are writing all sorts of experiences? Prose, poetry and plays.

Ako: We are dealing with hundreds and hundreds – many are honestly confused.

Adu: Why?

Ako: Can't you see that they are asking questions?

Adu: So?

Ako: You are not listening like those who invaded our shores; and like those who took over from those who invaded our shores. Like our present leaders.

Adu: Are you saying I am a dictator?

Ako: You are behaving like one(Goes into a momentary trance) They are coming.

Adu: At least you are so open-minded. That is a good sign that I am not dictatorial. At least I can still accommodate you within my region. Listen; someone has to tell someone to do something.

Ako: But we have to put it through the House of Assembly. There has to be a campaign and there has to be a vote. In all honesty, the constitution has to be

constitute in the nations of Africa.

- Reflecting on the notion that it is possible to wander through the desert for days and not find the way out. Add that a wondering soul is like rolling stone that gathers no moss.

Reflecting on what Africa can do for Africa.
Growing a Global Green Economy – Getting Africa Prepared to Lend a Hand by Rubin Patterson – in: Falola, T. & Brownell, E(eds) (2013) Landscape, Environment and Technology in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa London, Routledge. pp. 311-327.

Reading and reflecting on:
Boon, R. and Plastow, J(eds) (1998) Theatre Matters, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
'In all the cases examined that negation has arisen because of the process of colonisation which has uprooted or disenfranchised communities. The theatre not only examines the sense of loss of self-worth but also attempts to take part in the healing process of asserting culture and identity, so that the people involved can begin to re-value or even re-invent themselves in the context of the contemporary post-or neo-colonial situation.' (Boon, R. and Plastow, J.)

Reflecting on Nigeria. Femi Osofisan "The Revolution as Muse – Drama a surreptitious insurrection in a post-colonial, military state." in Boon, R. and Plastow, J(eds) (1998) Theatre Matters, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

p.12
'Thus in Nigeria political leaders from our conservative, Muslim north, who had

recognised in this situation. Well, they are coming. Adu: You take life too seriously. I would rather pay attention to their questions than listen to your rantings. This is the simple answer to your first question, woman. If you open your house to the rat, it will attract more rats. As for the old man's questions, I am not a politician and my father did not benefit from the colonialists. Those that benefited took copies of the rules and regulations designed by the colonialists and made it their own. They sat heavily on the rest of us as if we were their God-given stools, preaching fresh sermons to us every Sunday through the ministers they appointed and ordained, who mixed traditional wisdom with borrowed wisdom; so they were neither here nor there. In the interim, the poor and wounded suffered. Ako: Let's not touch religion. Adu: Why? Let's touch everything. Ako: That would take ages to untangle and we could be indicted for blasphemy and sent to jail. Adu: Why are you afraid? We are already in jail. Ako: We have no rich uncles to set us free. Adu: We never had rich uncles. That's why we are here. Ako: Sad. Adu: I am right. Let's concentrate on those who need us. Let's do something for them. I am determined to do something for these poor folks. Those that time left behind. If I do not do all I can now, I will not be able to do anything tomorrow. The souls of enthusiastic and stuffed leaders must be wondering why they could not save the lost. Poor Sankara, poor Saro Wiwa; poor us. Ako: Then we should have stayed at home and played politics with the crooked, the dishonest and the corrupt. Adu: Let's be realistic; if we don't pretend, we will die. You have too many pages of realistic theatre in your mind. I don't know why you studied Chemistry. Step into my shoes, step into my world, step into my mind-set. Ako: You did not tell me what to expect (Goes into a momentary trance) They are coming. Adu: Just act along, like a government inspector that seems to have a big office with little or no job attached to his big name. At least we can do better (Turns to the	resisted western education and missionary influence, and had even initially opposed the granting of independence, came to power. And the southerners, who had embraced western education, who had even travelled to Britain or to America to acquire knowledge of western systems, and so were to a large extent deeply westernised in their outlook, were not loved at all nor trusted by the duplicitous Britons, and ended up in the opposition parties.' P.12 (Boon, R. and Plastow, J.) **Inferring trauma from the following:** • Anecdotal reflection on the pain that the government has not been tough on crime and the causes of crime • Scarcity of water of water. This is anecdotally a reality in the urban and rural areas.

crowd). What's wrong with that child? Ako: He's lazy; what a waste to the continent. Adu: Don't be too quick to pass judgement like most western educated people do. On close examination, I can see that he is weak and tired; I think he's famished. Ako: He certainly has a mother and a father. What can we do for him? Adu: It's a play; there nothing we can do now. Let's keep the sermon rolling. That might revive him. Ako: Hmmm. Look carefully to your left; look. Adu: You are always seeing things. Ako: Can't you see those defiant children? Adu: I know them. Those ones in military fatigues. They are child soldiers. If you look carefully, you would see warlords behind them. Can you see the warlords? Ako: Who's equipping them with those weapons? Adu: You are asking too many questions. If we have to research the whole lot, of who is asking for the arms, who is manufacturing the arms, who is designing the arms, who is paying for the arms, why the people have to face each other with those dangerous arms, why children have to be involved, why the parents have to allow their children to be taken in the first place or if they were forcefully taken from their parents, and who the warlords are, what they are asking for and why they are agitating rather than arbitrating, who is benefitting from the sales of the arms and why the conflicts never end. The pain is great; the scars are too many; if we spend days opening them up, we would not be serving these people and not leading them to the Promised Land. Ako: Are you now Moses? Adu: First you called me a dictator – now you have clearly affirmed that I am Moses. You take life too seriously and you ask too many questions. Preach something; just say something. It would be healing to their souls. If you had spent all your time doing that, the continent would at least have been a better place. All you and your colleagues know how to do is to fabricate big words like atomic bombs from the inner recesses of the Dictionary and throw them at the populace without any element of differentiation. Why don't you do the simple thing and encourage them to tell their stories	• Anecdotally, most roads are death traps and frequent accidents do occur. • Electrification. Most people who can afford it have their own private electric generators. This becomes real nuisance to neighbours. • Urbanisation that gives credence to sanitation and the good life • The pain of education as a paradox. The notion is that the young people have gained western education. They listen to news from foreign nations and see movies of the semblance of good life. The question is, why are they not able to have the same experience in their own nation if the wealth is available? **Inferring trauma from the following:** • The transition reflects the notion of pain as one of the characters did not even know that they had come to the end of the play within the play. • He would have expected that there would be a resolution to their problems. He was sort of lost in the

and write? Yes, do the simple thing and teach them to reflect and write; from the many scars that define us. Though such scars seem extinct, they do sometimes erupt day dreams and night dreams. Though they seem extinct, there are voices hidden in them that are ready to scream, speak and surprise.

Ako: It should have been, wake up and eat. Can't you see that these lots are infested with hunger? Imagine the pictures drawn on the faces of these children look beyond and see the images drawn on the minds of their parents, if they are still alive – for I see skulls and bones moving.

Adu: Can't you see they are interested to write. You would have thought that they would not be interested despite the injuries and scars they have inherited. Many are enthusiastic, writing on whatever surface is available. They are asking questions and they are writing. They are not waiting for narratives to be handed to them like entertaining folktales. They just want to do something in, with and for the community. By the way, we are passing by the creeks. The creeks; don't you remember the creeks at home devastated by the oil companies?

Ako: Who knows, they could pay out large compensations. Then we would have to go back home.

Adu: We are bricked in. We can never go back home; we can never find our way home.

Ako: That's not what you told us when we started(Goes into a momentary trance) They are coming.

Adu: Don't say it to their hearing. Whisper it to my ears.

Ako: Then we are lost; doomed. And we are busy creating a library of dormant memories through depressed minds. What do you think we are doing?

Adu: If they do not write what they have in mind, there would be nothing to refer to. There will be no point of reference in the task of the distribution of the much needed bread.

Ako: I am sick and tired of all these.

Adu: Remember why we are here in the middle of nowhere; nearly marooned in the Sahara Desert. It's the narratives of certain individuals that lured us out. They said it's like a trip to heaven, they said it's a journey of few days, they said it makes sense to throw the risky dice; they said many have tried and succeeded, they said if you don't try it you would not win. All these local

performance.

- The reality of nearly reaching the final destination is equally grim. and food was a rare commodity.'
- 'We were not as hospitable and generous to each other. There was no steady flow of water and food was a rare commodity. The new Masters were wicked and strange.' This reflects the presence of middle men or Compradors. See: Page, 61, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (2013).

Johnson Varny is back after four months away, spent somewhere in the no man's land between Mali and Algeria. He'd been caught by the police here, who loaded him and 80 others onto the back of a truck, carting them back to Tin Sawatin. They spent two days and 700 miserable kilometers (400 miles) traveling southwest through nothing but sand and rocks. When they reached their destination -- a small collection of tin huts -- the police simply unloaded their human cargo and left them to fend for themselves.

All picture and Notes on Kingsley culled from: https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=2021&bih=1037&q=Nigerians+travelling+to+Europe through+the+Sahara+desert&oq=Nigerians+travelling+to+Europethrough+the+Sahara+desert&gs_l=img.3...2968.19348.0.19821.55.13.0.42.42.0.82.904.13.13.0....0...1ac.1.64.img..0.24.965...0j0i30j0i8i30j0i24.23qKX96eiZE#imgrc=wJRqQnaKaVO0DM%3A

Picture culled from: http://www.irinnews.org/report/80835/west-africa-migrants-risk-all-cross-desert

Reflecting on Kingsley – a young immigrant who succeeded to travel by land. Picture and Notes Culled from: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/ moving-walls/13/cameroon-france-

narratives born out of the experience of reading narratives of western minds, laced with glossy pictures of cities and pretty women dressed in bikinis, ready to be taken. You know the truth – let it set you free.

Ako: The truth cannot save us now; we are here drinking our smelly urine (Goes into a momentary trance). They are coming.

Adu: Who? The former or the latter?

Ako: I don't know.

Adu: They said the streets are paved with gold.

Ako: Golden sand dunes.

Adu: They said
That we will only suffer for few days
Then we would arrive
Driving long cars
Jump behind the Chevrolet
The Chevrolet

Ako: It's lovely. Pretty new.

Adu: You dreamer
At last, you have caught the vision.
The wheels are solid.
Soon, we will be,
Sending millions
Through the Western Union home
Smoking the fattest cigars
Dancing like spiders in foreign shoes.
Thinking about foreign girls
Beautiful French and London girls

Ako: We are still here. Things have not changed.

Adu: Pretend or die. Pretend.

Ako: Careful; do not hit the dead Carmel.

Adu: They are signposts.
You are too negative.
Pretend; pretend or die.
Enjoy the ride.

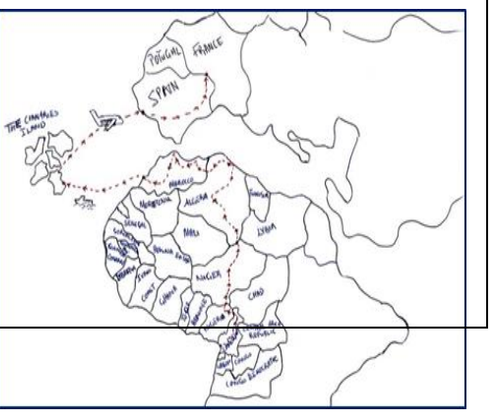
Ako: They did not mention
The roasting of the day
The freezing at night
Who wrote the books?

Adu: Who translated the books?

travel-journal-clandestine-immigrant

Kingsley tells his parents that he is leaving for France. They had given him money for the trip.

Kingsley and others at The Agadez depot, considered the gateway to the Sahara Desert. Agadez, Niger, May, 2004 migrants crammed into the back of the four-wheel drive vehicle that will take them across the Sahara Desert.



Who thought us to believe
In dusty books
To retain their magic spells
To think of Europe
To think of America?

Ako: They came like the rains
Then overtook us like the floods
Some came like poisonous clouds
Bearing evil tidings
That created fear and distrust
In our midst.

Adu: Some came like friends
Then clipped us with chains
Turning our eyes to their books
Far from our experiences.

Ako: Are we going to die here?

Adu: We will leave you here if you keep being negative.

Ako: What would become of me?

Adu: You will become a signpost, roasted and dried stiff.

Ako: Give me your mind-set. I don't want to be a signpost.

Adu: You don't seem ready. I have gone ahead of you.

Ako: Really? But what about these people? We asked them to write.

Adu: They should be able to take care of themselves by any means necessary. Such is life.

Ako: Really? Why did we bother?

Adu: It's a play.

Ako: This does not look like a play anymore; we should have stayed at home, eating from dust-bins.

Adu: It's too late now.

Ako: (Goes into a momentary feat once again) They are coming.

Adu: The former or the latter? It could either be the British, the Portuguese, the French or the Chinese with their big plans.

Adu: Let them come.

Map drawn by Kingsley showing the route of his journey. Reflecting on the notion that there are some who are considered Sahara Desert Forgotten Refugees.

Having been disappointed by a faulty boat, Kingsley and his group take off a second time, ten days after the boat capsized. They are under constant surveillance by the smugglers, who are armed with knives. Once they are close to the Canary Islands, they will be recovered by the Spanish Coast Guard and taken to a detention center. Atlantic Ocean, between Morocco and the Canary Islands, Spain, October 2004 © Olivier Jobard

After three weeks at a detention center

Ako: Why?

Adu: It's too late to worry now.

Ako: You don't seem to care.

Adu: You take life too seriously.

Ako: You taught me; I wonder why you can't sustain the truth that you preached.

Adu: It's too late now. The end.

2nd Man: Just like that?

1st Man:
Yes. Just like that. Back to reality. Before a handful of us got to the sea side, our clothing had been battered by the bad conditions and inclement weather. Strange behaviours set in. We could hardly understand one another. Some would rather speak to themselves than speak to anybody. It was worse in the night when we managed to sleep under rocks or some strange places. Some would laugh all through the night or even speak endlessly in their sleep.

There was a young man who would struggle in his sleep screaming and cursing. Whenever he wakes up, he was told what he did the previous night by those who cared to share with him. He responded by saying that he was fighting myriads of enemies who were trying to stop him from getting to Europe. There were so many other tales of folks who decided to play dumb for no reason or even refused to eat or take a bath when we managed to hit water in some spring or Oasis. Some said that they were having religious observances – that such practices would help to reach their destination. We were not as hospitable and generous to each other. There was no steady flow of water and food was a rare commodity. The new Masters were wicked and strange. What was more frustrating was that some of us thought that they knew the way but lead us to wrong directions. We ended up walking for days only to realise that we had taken a wrong turn or wandered off to a similar road that brought us to where we had started from in the past two weeks. We were like aimless wanderers. It was such a daunting experience that some of us looked as if they would have no choice but to eat one of us who died. Thank goodness it never happened. Not even when one of the girls died the following morning after groaning all night. The problem is that she had eaten something that she would not usually eat at home. She had stooled and stooled for days.

We had to stop trekking so as to help her in any way we could. There was no medical help and we were all

in the Canary Islands, Kingsley is released because the Spanish authorities cannot determine his nationality. He and his fellow migrants are flown to mainland Spain. Malaga, Spain, November 2004.

Kingsley's new life begins. His immigration status has been regularized, and he has found employment at a warehouse. He spends a total of three hours commuting to and from the job.

Kingsley works ten-hour days at his warehouse job. Cergy-Pontoise, France, December 2005

surrounded by sand dunes. That night she could hardly sleep as she kept groaning and groaning. Later that night she convulsed and died. We were stunned – knowing that it could be our turn soon. At dawn, we sang a song and buried her in a shallow grave – bidding her farewell in the best way we could. You could hear a pin drop as we all continued to walk in the sand for miles upon miles – making up for distances that we could have covered the previous day.

We could not help ourselves or do anything to change our situations. Visibly, cracks of all sorts were showing. We barely dragged ourselves. We had totally lost the sense of time as we kept wandering; marooned. We walked during the day and night and some of us simply defecated on themselves. At some point, we even lost appetite for food and water and just continued walking. We could hardly feel the pain of the trip as men and women groaned like babies as they hid infected and cracking skins and sores from flies.

We just dragged ourselves along till we got to the side of the massive sea – all heavily blistered in body and mind. That is where we handed all that was left of our monies to an agent of some sort who promised to arrange a raft that would take us across to Europe. Only few of us survived to greet each other at the camp in Spain. After recovery, we were huddled into a court where we were ordered to be sent back to our countries of origin.

2nd Man:
Thanks for the story; I will embark on the journey.

1st Man:
You will?

Unknown Voice:
If home was really kind to us, would we bother to embark on an endless trip? If home was really home, would we bother to suffer and strain ourselves for nothing?

The End

Migrants risk all to cross the Sahara Desert

Culled from:
http://www.irinnews.org/report/80835/west-africa-migrants-risk-all-cross-desert

Appendix 3

ABAYOLE - A traditional Esan folktale transcribed from Esan to English by Isi Agboaye.

Once upon a time, there was a hunter who was fond of bringing the *Otien* fruit home to his son. Having enjoyed the fruits, the son wanted to know the source of the fruit. When he asked his father, he was warned about the dangers on the way; knowing fully well that many spirits abound around the fruit tree. The mother also warned him not to ask such questions, knowing that if the son ever goes to the source of the fruit, he would not return alive.

The hunter's son then devised a trick to outwit his father. He cleverly cut a hole in his father's hunting bag and put some ashes in it. Since the father generally leaves home at the first cockcrow before dawn, he did not notice the trail of ashes following him. When the hunter got to the big *Otien* tree, he picked as many as possible, leaving the rest for the animals and the spirits. He did not know that his son was nearby watching him, having followed the trail of the ashes. The father quickly left the place and went on his hunting business. Normally, people pick *Otien* fruits that may have fallen on the ground at night.

When the boy got there, he climbed the tree; a forbidden act. He's only supposed to pick the *Otien* that falls on the ground. He ate and ate and ate and began to collect some to take home. He ate so much that he slept off on top of the tree. Soon the spirits arrived and were joined by some more awkward looking spirits. Some had two heads, five heads, ten heads one leg, five legs, ten legs.

One of the spirits said, 'I smell a human being around,' so they started searching. After a while, they saw him and ordered him to climb down from the tree. Some rushed to the branches and dragged him down. They then began to make plans to kill and eat him. The boy was so frightened and frustrated. An idea suddenly popped into his mind. He suggested that he should sing and dance for them, saying that he's a great singer and dancer. The spirits quickly held a consultation among them and agreed that the boy should sing and dance. Even before he had started singing, one of the funny looking spirits had started dancing. He then started to sing.

SONG

ESAN:
Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole – o
Eee – ole vba hon
Anube tu – be

ENGLISH:
Father told him
Anube tu – be
Father told him
Anube tu – be
Father told him
He refused to heed
Anube tu - be

As soon as he started singing all the spirits joined in clapping and humming till they all got the actual song. They danced beautifully with the boy and there was much excitement in the air. The boy danced in the circle with them and soon began to go to short distances and coming back to the actual circle. He added a new dimension by going further, far away from the actual spot and coming back.

SONG

Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole – o
Eee – ole vba hon
Anube tu – be

At first, the spirits would dance with him and come back. Later, they developed some level of trust and so allowed him to cover a longer distance. He continued increasing the distance and coming back to the foot of the tree and the actual circle.

SONG

Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole

Anube tu – be
Aba yole – o
Eee – ole vba hon
Anube tu – be

He later danced to a long distance and, since they had confidence in him, they did not check his movements. Moreover, they were seriously involved in singing and dancing that they did not suspect that the boy would run off. Seeing that none of the spirits was around, the boy turned towards home and began to run as fast as his legs would carry him. Meanwhile, the spirits were still singing and dancing and generally enjoying the song.

SONG

Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole – o
Eee – ole vba hon
Anube tu – be

Meanwhile, they noticed that the boy had not showed up for a while. The spirits waited for more minutes, listening for his voice; but there was no sound of singing in the distance. They never thought that the boy would disappear because they sort of trusted him. The spirits then decided to run after him in order to catch and eat him as planned. Most of the spirits could not run fast enough because of their apparent impediments with several legs and heads. They all nominated the one-legged spirit who could move very fast; about a mile per leap. Then the one-legged spirit began to chase after him. Though exhausted, the boy continued to run and run and run.

The boy quickly got to the front of his house and began to shout, calling on his father and mother to open the door. The parents opened the door, wondering where he had been. The one legged spirit had moved swiftly before the boy could run through the door and dash into the house. So the spirit reached his hand to grab him and his sharp finger ran through his back. This created the mark that runs down the middle of everybody's back today. The one-legged spirit quickly licked his blood-stained finger, resting on the consolation that he may not have even got such a little share if the boy had been caught and killed.

When he got to where other spirits were, he told them that the boy had escaped. But they were suspicious of him because of the blood

stain on his lips. They then concluded that he had caught and eaten the boy alone. The spirits then killed the one-legged spirit in lieu of the greedy boy. So, the greedy boy was saved by his quick wits despite his initial disobedience.

SONG

Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole
Anube tu – be
Aba yole – o
Eee – ole vba hon
Anube tu – be

The End.